CONTEMPLATIONS AND MEDITATIONS

(Passion and Death of our Lord)

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CONTEMPLATIONS AND MEDITATIONS.

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W. H. Eyre, S.J.

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CONTEMPLATIONS AND MEDITATIONS

ON THE PASSION AND DEATH, AND ON THE GLORIOUS LIFE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

ACCORDING TO THE METHOD OF ST. IGNATIUS

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY A SISTER OF MERCY

REVISED BY

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Ave Cor Jesu.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIFTH EDITION.

THE rapid sale of the four first editions of this little work has shown that its value has been appreciated. The Translator has added to it the Meditations on "The Glorious Life of Our Lord," which, without increasing the expense of the book, will be found to add considerably to its worth. The whole has been carefully revised, and every suggestion that has been kindly offered as an improvement has been adopted.

The Translator takes this opportunity of thanking the many kind friends who have taken an interest in the work, and so charitably aided in propagating its sale. She earnestly begs for a continuance of the same kind efforts in favour of the New Edition.

Copies can be had on application to the Sisters of Mercy, Coventry, as well as of the Publishers.

PREFACE.

THE French work, *Méditations selon la Méthode de St. Ignace, sur la Vie et sur les Mystères de N.-S. Jésus-Christ*, has been for several years in use in this country, as well as in France; and has been found of great value by those who have taken it for their guide. Although the most serious obstacles to success in mental prayer are an unmortified life, want of recollection of the Divine Presence, and neglect to prepare overnight for the important work with which the next day is to begin, there is no doubt that the want of a good manual interposes great additional difficulties. A book may contain abundance of admirable matter, and be useful for instruction or spiritual reading, and yet be almost a hindrance, instead of a help, to meditation. A good method faithfully followed; divisions not arbitrarily made, but suggesting trains of thought, really distinct, and yet not diverging, but harmoniously subordinated to one leading idea; the exclusion of all irrelevant, speculative, and superfluous matter; brevity and simplicity of expression, and the unction which can hardly be found except when the Meditations have been first made devoutly in the same form by the proposer of them—these seem the most essential conditions for such a work; and experience, the best test of such things, has found them united in the Manual, the fourth volume of which (on our Lord's sufferings), is now, for the first time, accessible in English. The Translator, who is herself familiar with these Meditations

by long use, has aimed at as faithful a reproduction of the original as the English idiom permits. She places the little work under the patronage of the great Saint whose method is faithfully followed, and something of whose spirit has been caught, in these Meditations ; and repeats the prayer of the author, that all who use them to nourish their piety, and open their hearts afresh to the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, may so imitate Him in their lives as to secure eternal happiness.

As some may prefer a simpler form of the prayer *Anima Christi* than that given on page 5, the prayer is given here in Latin and English :—

Anima Christi, sanctifica me.	Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Corpus Christi, salva me.	Body of Christ, save me.
Sanguis Christi, inebria me.	Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Aqua lateris Christi, lava me.	Water from the side of Christ, wash me
Passio Christi, conforta me.	Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O bone Jesu, exaudi me ;	O good Jesus, hear me ;
Intra Tua vulnera absconde me :	Within Thy wounds hide me ;
Ne permittas me separari a Te ;	Never permit me to be separated from Thee ;
Ab hoste maligno defende me ;	From the malicious foe defend me ;
In hora mortis meæ voca me,	In the hour of my death call me,
Et jube me venire ad Te,	And bid me come to Thee,
Ut cum Sanctis Tuis laudem Te	That with Thy Saints I may praise Thee
In sæcula sæculorum. Amen.	For ever and ever. Amen.

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CONTEMPLATIONS AND MEDITATIONS

ON THE

Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

FIRST FUNDAMENTAL MEDITATION.

Who is He that suffers?

Preparatory Prayer. Grant, O my divine Jesus, that, during this meditation, all my intentions, all my actions, and all the operations of my soul may tend purely and solely to Thy service and the glory of Thy divine Majesty.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Thy love.

Send forth Thy spirit, and they shall be created.

And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray.

O God, who hast instructed the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us also the gift of the same Spirit, that we may love and relish what is good, and evermore rejoice in His divine consolations, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Hail Mary, &c.

1st Prelude. Transport yourself in spirit to the Garden of Olives, to the streets of Jerusalem, or to Mount Calvary, the scenes of the sufferings of Jesus.

2nd Prelude. Grant, through Thy grace, O my Jesus, that, in meditating on Thy sorrows, I may conceive a lively horror of sin, which caused them, and an ardent love for Thee, since it is for love of me that Thou didst suffer all.

1st Point. He who suffers is God.

Who is He that suffers? It is Jesus, that is, God made Man. It is He who is infinite wisdom, power, sanctity, and goodness, since it is written of Him, that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are contained within Him (Coloss. ii. 3); that the plenitude of the Divinity dwells in Him corporally (Coloss. ii. 9); that He is the image of the Invisible God, the First-Born of all creatures (Coloss. i. 15). It is by Him that every thing on earth and in heaven has been made (Coloss. i. 16); all things visible and invisible, the thrones, the dominations, the principalities, the powers, &c.; and without Him nothing was made, and He existed before all things (Coloss. i. 16, 17). Heaven and the most sublime intelligencies are His throne, and the earth His footstool. The winds and the tempests are the ministers of His vengeance. He is seated at the right hand of the Majesty of God (Coloss. iii. 1), and holds in His hands the fate of all men, even of the sinners who persecute Him. He who has said by one of His prophets, that He alone knows the gates of death, and the number of man's days on earth, is now like a leper, struck by the hand of God, despised and outraged, without sightliness or beauty. Who will believe us? (Isa. liii. 1), said the Prophet who beheld and predicted this. Who can understand such a reverse? How is it that Jesus Christ, concealing His Divinity, does not annihilate His enemies? Ah! His Heart answers the question: I have loved thee with an everlasting love (Jerem. xxxi. 3). O my God and my All!

2nd Point. Who is He that suffers?

It is Jesus. It is He who says, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart"; He of whom it is written, He shall not cry out, nor shall His voice be heard in the public places; smoking flax He shall not extinguish (Isa. xlii. 2, 3); He who has never given offence to any one, but who has passed His life doing good, and curing those possessed by the devil. What beauty, what meekness, what modesty appear on His countenance! What innocence, what mercy shine forth there, and recall to us the prodigies His Sacred Heart has operated during His public life! It is this same Jesus who said to the Centurion: "I will go Myself and cure thy servant" (Matt. viii. 7); to the Widow of Naim, whose only son was being carried to the grave: "Woman, weep not" (Luke vii. 13); who said to the Samaritan woman: "If thou didst but know the gift of God, and who is He that asketh of thee to drink" (John iv. 10); to the sinner Magdalen: "Many sins are forgiven thee, because thou hast loved much" (Luke vii. 47); to the woman taken in adultery: "No one has condemned thee, neither will I condemn thee" (John viii. 10, 11). It is the same Jesus who made answer to the wicked Pharisees who accused Him of too much familiarity with sinners: "Go thou and learn what this meaneth: I will have mercy and not sacrifice; they who are well need not a physician, but they that are ill" (Matt. ix. 13, 12). It is the same Jesus who has a hundred times received me into His arms as the father of the Prodigal Son received his child. It is the same Jesus who calms my fears and sustains my weakness in the midst of the obstacles that the world presents before me, saying to me, as to His dear disciples: "Have confidence: I have overcome the world" (John xvi. 33). What sentiments ought not my heart to conceive at the sight of so much love and amiability on one side, and such contempt and outrage on the other!

3rd Point. He who suffers has every right to our love. It is Jesus who suffers. It is then our Father, our

Brother, our Master, our Physician, our Mediator before God; it is our Friend, the Spouse of our Soul, our Nourishment, our Guardian, and Protector. He holds all these titles in our regard; let us dwell a little on each one. Let us weigh the strength of the ties which nature forms in the heart of children towards their father, or of the spouse towards her husband, or of a miserable wretch towards the friend who saves him from being lost. It is faith and grace which have formed our ties towards Jesus. He is infinitely more to us than all these. What are our sentiments towards Him in the pitiable state to which we see Him reduced?

Colloquy. Alas, my divine Saviour, the daughter weeps over the death of her father, the spouse over that of her husband, the friend over the death of her friend; and is it possible that I should be as hard as stone and as dry as earth in meditating on the mysteries of Thy Passion! O my Jesus! do not permit me to remain any longer in such culpable insensibility; cast on me such a look of compassion as that which converted St. Peter, that so it may be said of me, as of that penitent Apostle: "And going forth, he wept bitterly".

Resolution. To produce frequent acts of contrition, full of confidence and love, during the day.

Offering of the Resolution. My God, I offer Thee this resolution: unless Thou deignest to bless it, I cannot be faithful to it; from Thy goodness, then, I hope to obtain this blessing, which I ask of Thee in the name and in the merits of Jesus, my divine Saviour.

Holy Virgin, Mother of my God and also my Mother, my good Angel and holy patron Saints, obtain for me the grace to keep this resolution with perfect fidelity.

Spiritual Bouquet. My Love is crucified, but I am unwilling to suffer anything.

Prayer.

Soul of Christ, be my Sanctification;
Body of Christ, be my Salvation;
Blood of Christ, fill all my veins;
Water of Christ's side, wash out my stains;
Passion of Christ, my comfort be.
O good Jesus, listen to me:
In Thy Wounds I fain would hide,
Ne'er to be parted from Thy side.
Guard me should the foe assail me;
Call me when my life shall fail me;
Bid me come to Thee above,
With Thy Saints to sing Thy love,
World without end. Amen.

Examen of the Meditation. 1st. Did I carefully prepare the points of my meditation, and resolve on the fruit I would draw from it? 2nd. Did I recall the subject of it to my mind before I went to sleep? 3rd. Did I, from the moment of awaking, occupy myself with it, and try to exclude other thoughts? 4th. Did I place myself as I ought to do in the presence of God? 5th. Did I make the preparatory prayer and the preludes? 6th. Did I preserve a becoming reverence in my attitude? 7th. Did I take care not to pass lightly from one point to another? 8th. Did I reflect on the mystery before me with a sincere desire of profiting by it? 9th. Have I made the colloquies, asking for grace to practise the virtues that God set before me? 10th. Have I made resolutions for the day, and determined on the opportunities when I would put them in practice? 11th. Have I made a spiritual bouquet?

SECOND FUNDAMENTAL MEDITATION.

What Torments Jesus suffers.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.
1st and 2nd Preludes, page 2.
1st Point. The exterior pains of Jesus.

Every species of suffering is united in the person of our adorable Jesus. Let us go into details, beginning with His privations. He was despoiled of all things; but did *He* possess anything, of whom it is said, that "He had not whereon to lay His head" (Matt. viii. 20)? He had a robe woven by the hands of His blessed Mother, the remembrance of which was dear to Him. It was rudely taken off Him; lots were afterwards cast to decide who should possess it. He was deprived of the reputation He had acquired by His preaching and miracles; a notorious thief was preferred before Him; they brought false witnesses against Him; they treated Him as a seducer and disturber of the public peace, and a fool. He suffered in all His senses: His eyes were tormented by the sight of the executioners and of His blessed Mother, whose grief added to His own; His ears by the mockeries and clamour of the people, who demanded His death; His taste by the gall and vinegar presented to Him; His smell by the infection of the dungeon, where He passed the night; His head was crowned with thorns; His face buffeted and covered with spittle; His eyes blinded by tears mingled with the blood which flowed from His temples; His feet and hands were pierced with nails; His shoulders torn by whips and scourges, and wounded anew by the weight of the cross; His side was opened; all His limbs dragged and dislocated in such a manner that all His bones might be counted (Ps. xxi. 18); in a word, the whole of His body tortured to such a degree, that from the crown of His head to the sole of His foot there was no soundness in Him (Isa. i. 6). The

Prophet having beheld Him in this sad state, knew Him not. But do *we* not know Him? It is Jesus, our Master, He whom we have promised to follow and to imitate.

2nd Point. The interior sufferings of Jesus.

Jesus, that generous Benefactor of all mankind, for whom He was going to die, foresaw how the greater number would abuse the benefit of their redemption; the reprobation of Judas, and of so many others, was also present to Him; and this it was that pierced His Sacred Heart. The most affectionate of friends, He felt acutely His abandonment by His Apostles, the denial of St. Peter, the treason of Judas, the sorrows of Mary. His loving Heart was not less sensible of the multiplied outrages offered to His divine perfections;—to His sanctity before Caiphas, when He was treated as a blasphemer: "He hath blasphemed, what need have we of further witnesses?" (Matt. xxvi. 65); to His wisdom;—insolent servants dare to exclaim: "Prophesy unto us, O Christ; who is he that struck Thee?" (Matt. xxvi. 68), when they gave Him blows; to His royalty;—torn with whips, and exhausted with loss of blood, clothed with an old purple rag, crowned with thorns, a reed in His hand, He beheld the soldiers pay Him the most insulting and derisive homage; "Hail, King of the Jews!" (Matt. xxvii. 29), when they spat in His face. His almighty power was not more spared: "Vah! Thou that destroyest the temple of God, and in three days buildest it up again, come down now from the cross" (Matt. xxvii. 40); "He has saved others, Himself He cannot save" (Matt. xxvii. 42); "He trusted in God, let Him now deliver Him; for He said, I am the Son of God" (Matt. xxvii. 43).

3rd Point. What fruit ought we to draw from the sufferings of Jesus?

Let us, the disciples of Jesus Christ, who contemplate His sorrows, recall to mind at this moment all the noble qualities of His adorable Heart, as we meditated on them yesterday, and, to fill us with confusion, compare our hearts with this divine Heart—our trifling pains with

the dreadful torments He endures. What have we usually to suffer? Very little—almost nothing—some trifling inconveniences; whilst Jesus is plunged in an ocean of grief:—some little disappointments: Jesus sees His sufferings useless for the greater number:—an annoying raillery; let us compare it with the outrages of the servants and soldiers and the people:—a moment of coolness from those we love; Jesus is abandoned, deserted, and betrayed:—a little repugnance to fulfil certain duties; that which Jesus experienced for His sufferings and death was so great that it forced from Him a sweat of blood. After this, shall we still complain and lose courage? Alas, we are but too often deficient in it; and this it is which should afflict us. Let us have recourse with confidence to Jesus, who has merited for us the grace to suffer.

Colloquy with our Blessed Lady. O Mary, my Mother! where wast thou when they treated thy Son so inhumanly! Thy enemies and mine have covered the body of Jesus with wounds to soften the hearts of sinners, and mine above all. Obtain mercy for me by penetrating me with a lively contrition for my past sins. Thou canst do it, O Mother most powerful! be mindful, then, of a child whom thou didst bring forth in sorrow.

Colloquy with our Lord. O my Jesus! when I meditate on Thy sufferings, I am sometimes seized with indignation against Thy persecutors. Ah, I ought rather to turn my indignation against myself, since it was my sins that caused Thee to suffer thus.

Colloquy with God the Father. O eternal Father! is it possible that they treat thus Thy only Son, whom Thou hast sent to men to conduct them to heaven? This is a mystery that Thy love alone can explain to us.

Resolution. To produce frequent acts of contrition.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. My Jesus has been blasphemed and outraged; and shall I seek for honours and praises?

Prayer. Pater noster.
Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRD FUNDAMENTAL MEDITATION.

JESUS SUFFERS FROM ALL PERSONS, PRESENT, PAST, AND FUTURE.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.
1st and 2nd Preludes, page 2.
1st Point. Jesus suffers from all those present.

Jesus suffers from His Father so great an abandonment and dereliction, especially upon the cross, that, notwithstanding His resignation, He cannot refrain from making Him some loving complaints: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matt. xxvii. 46). Herod mocks Him, with all his court; Pilate, that cowardly and unjust judge, condemns Him to death; the high-priests Annas and Caiphas reject Him; the Scribes and Pharisees accuse Him; the soldiers crown Him with thorns; the executioners scourge Him; the multitude cry out against Him: "Away with Him! away with Him! crucify Him!" (John xix. 15); "His blood be upon us and upon our children!" (Matt. xxvii. 25); "He is worthy of death". One of His Apostles betrays Him, another denies Him, they all abandon Him. His Mother alone, with St. John and a few pious women, accompany Him to Calvary. Add to all this, the barbarous joy of His executioners, and of the demons by whom they are inspired.

2nd Point. Jesus suffers from past and future generations.

As Jesus suffered to save all mankind, all who have existed since the beginning of the world, as well as all who will exist to the end of it, have been the cause of His torments. Thus we were present to Him, we His privileged children, whom He has forestalled with so many graces

and loaded with so many favours. Although we should have had the happiness to preserve our baptismal innocence, nevertheless we came into the world stained with the guilt of sin; but if to this first misfortune we have added the guilt of actual sin, what a share have we not had in the sorrows of Jesus! All men have contributed, more or less, to His death, according to the measure of their offences. Let us here recall to our mind all the benefits with which those who actually put Him to death had been overwhelmed; let us remember also those we ourselves have received. What goodness on one side! what ingratitude on the other! In order to draw fruit from this meditation, let us compare ourselves with Jesus. If we happen sometimes to be received coldly by persons from whom we expect help or consolation, let us look at Jesus forsaken by His Father. Do we suffer from our enemies, let us behold Jesus treated by His as a slave and malefactor. If our troubles come from those who are dear to us, who have been loaded by us with benefits, and perhaps even drawn by us from misery, let us fix our eyes on Jesus: our friends are not more bound to us than Peter was to his Master; we have never done any one so much good as Jesus had done to His persecutors.

Colloquy. O my Jesus! it is for me that Thou hast suffered, and from me. Ah! I hear Thee make me this paternal reproach: If even it were only My enemies who persecute Me, I could bear it; but it is an ungrateful people that I have overwhelmed with benefits—it is a spouse whom My Heart cherishes, and has preferred to so many others. O my Saviour, what wilt Thou have me do to repair my past ingratitude?

Resolutions. Often to make acts of love during the day. To practise some acts of mortification, or at least to receive with joy those which Providence may send.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Heart of Jesus, saturated with reproaches, have mercy on me!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.
Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FOURTH FUNDAMENTAL MEDITATION.

FOR WHAT END HAS JESUS CHRIST SUFFERED?

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Transport yourself into the Garden of Olives, to the streets of Jerusalem, and to Mount Calvary. Consider the adorable person of Jesus; call to mind His greatness, His innocence, His goodness, His interior and exterior sufferings. Cast your eyes also on the multitude of His persecutors.

2nd Prelude. O Jesus! grant me grace to know the end for which Thou didst suffer. Grant, O divine Master, that it may make a deep impression on me. Already I know that Thou hast suffered for me; but I desire to understand more and more the motives which induced Thy loving Heart to suffer for me, that I may unite myself to Thee more and more, and follow Thee more closely.

1st Point. Jesus suffered to teach us great truths.

Jesus could have saved us by a single act of submission. Why, then, did He endure such long and painful torments? Because He wished thereby to teach us the greatness of His Father, and the enormity of the outrage that sin has offered to His incomparable majesty. Again, He would teach us the value of the graces which He has purchased for us, the price of our souls which He has redeemed from hell. He wished also to show us how much He loved us; and among the many other proofs of this, His Sacred Heart has chosen one which accords best with His infinite charity, for: "No one can show greater love than to lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13).

Lastly, our good Master suffered to inspire us with an unbounded confidence. We have sinned—our offences make us timid; but let us draw near to the cross: there we shall see our Saviour promising Paradise to the repentant thief in order to encourage us. His blood cries not for vengeance, but for mercy. He bears us written in His feet, in His hands, and in His loving Heart in indelible characters; it is only through these wounds that the eternal Father looks upon us.

2nd Point. Jesus Christ suffered to give us an example.

The Almighty, in giving His orders to Moses for the building of the ark and preparing other objects necessary for His worship, said to him: Make it after the pattern which has been shown thee on the mount (Heb. viii. 5). The same words may be addressed to us Christians, engaged by our profession to imitate Jesus. Calvary is the great school where He teaches us the practice of the most heroic virtues; it is there we must go to learn patience, resignation, courage, the love of enemies, meekness, and constancy in the midst of the most severe trials. We must not deceive ourselves; the kingdom of heaven suffers violence; none but generous souls can enter there. But if the difficulties of virtue alarm us, what force has not the example of Jesus to raise our courage! Were a soldier to see his prince go forward the first to the combat, and brave the greatest perils, he would not fear to walk in his steps. Jesus is our Head, our adorable Sovereign. We must suffer, but He has been the first to suffer. Let us cast our eyes on the multitude of Saints who have followed Him in the painful but salutary road of the Cross; we can do what they have done, for we have the same grace. Let us, then, embrace what they have embraced, since we hope for the same glorious recompense.

Colloquy. O Jesus! who would not love Thee, after so many proofs of love! who would not love the Cross, since Thou hast made it Thy delight! who would not hate sin, which caused Thee such cruel torments! who would not value his own soul more than all else! who

would not have confidence in Thee! I cast myself into Thy arms, O my Saviour; do with me whatever Thou wilt, exercise over me Thy mercy to its fullest extent.

Resolution. To make frequent acts of contrition, confidence, love, and gratitude.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. If any one love not Jesus, let him be anathema.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTH FUNDAMENTAL MEDITATION.

Patience and Meekness of Jesus during His Passion.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st and 2nd Preludes, page 2.

1st Point. Jesus is Master of Himself, and submits to His murderers. He manifests this by His actions.

Let us for a moment fix our eyes on Jesus in the midst of His executioners. What sweetness, what peace and calm, reign in His countenance! Not a movement of impatience! He lets them make a jest of Him as if He were a senseless statue; He obeys all those who wish to make Him suffer some new torment; He presents His face to Judas, and His hands to His executioners; He puts off His clothes and takes them up again, just as He is ordered; He extends Himself on the Cross without losing one iota of His serenity and perfect submission.

2nd Point. Jesus is Master of Himself, and submits to His murderers. He manifests this by His words.

Examine in like manner the words of Jesus. He says to each one what is needful. He speaks to His friends and to His enemies in language suited to each; He calls Judas by the name of friend, to try once more to win

him; He makes the servant of the high-priest feel the effrontery of his act; adjured by the name of God, He gives testimony to the truth. The violence of His torments does not make Him forgetful on any point; He takes care of His Mother, recommending her to His disciple; He promises Paradise to the penitent thief. To see and hear Him in the midst of this scene of violence, one might take Him for a king, who, from his throne, gives laws to his subjects. Yes, He is our King, and He gives to all the world the most beautiful precepts upon every virtue.

3rd Point. We ought to imitate Jesus.

Let us learn from our divine Master the inestimable value of sufferings, and how to render our own meritorious. Jesus Christ has suffered for us, leaving us an example that we may follow in His steps. Sufferings will not be wanting to us; divine Providence will contrive enough for us in the course of our lives, either on the part of strangers or from those with whom we live; and even, should these be wanting to us, our own heart alone will suffice to make us suffer; we shall be like enough to Jesus on this point: it will, however, remain to us to imitate the virtues He showed forth in suffering. Let us enter into ourselves, and see whether, when we suffer, it is not with a sad countenance, even if we do not manifest sadness in our words, or show trouble and uneasiness in our actions. Let us humble ourselves profoundly, yet not be discouraged; if the sufferings of Jesus were so perfect, it was to give value to ours.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us beg of Him a conformity of heart and actions with His.

Resolution. To watch over ourselves, that we may fulfil cheerfully and willingly those duties which cause us the greatest repugnance.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. O Jesus, meek and humble of Heart. make me like to Thee.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.
Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SIXTH FUNDAMENTAL MEDITATION.

REPETITION OF THE PRECEDING MEDITATIONS, APPLYING THEM TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Transport yourself in spirit to Mount Calvary, and there behold our Lord on the Cross, His sacred Side opened.

2nd Prelude. Divine Jesus, grant me conformity and union of heart with Thy own adorable Heart.

1st Point. Let us repass in our mind all the greatness, the amiability, and sanctity of Jesus. Let us recall all the titles with which He has invested Himself to gain our love, the benefits with which He has loaded us, what He has suffered, from whom He has suffered, why He has suffered, and for what end. Let us dwell longer on the reflections which move us the most, that so we may the better understand them, relish them, and impress them the more deeply in our soul. Let us consider that Jesus has done and suffered all to give us infallible proofs of the tenderness of His love. It is to His Sacred Heart that all our affection should tend, for His loving Heart is the centre and principle of all that appears outwardly; it is *that* which gives motion to all those actions whose value is applied to us. This is truly effective love.

2nd Point. Let us place our heart beside that of Jesus, that He may inflame it by the ardour of that adorable furnace; and when we feel ourselves on fire with love for Him, let us render that love effective—that is to say, let us follow faithfully all His inspirations, let us try to do good for His sake, and procure His glory to

the utmost of our power. Let us embrace the cross and humiliations. In this consists the practice of the love of the Sacred Heart. Let us ardently desire to enter into the contemplation of the sufferings of Jesus, and let us ask of Him the grace to know intimately through what motive He has suffered so much. St. Ignatius speaks of love as especially manifested in a mutual exchange of gifts. Jesus has given us every drop of His blood; what does He ask of us in return?

Colloquy with the divine Heart of Jesus, according as we may feel inspired.

Resolution. To attach ourselves to the fulfilment of our duties, however lowly they may seem to us. Every thing is great in the service of God.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Heart of Jesus, make me love Thee ever more and more!

Prayer. Pater noster, &c.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIRST CONTEMPLATION.

Jesus in the Garden of Olives.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "After this discourse, Jesus came with His disciples to a place called Gethsemane, where there was a garden, into which He entered. He said to His disciples, Stay you here while I go yonder and pray. Then leaving the rest, He took with Him Peter, James, and John, and He began to fear and to be heavy. My soul, He said, is sorrowful even unto death; stay you here, and watch with Me. And when He was gone forward a little, He fell upon His face and prayed thus: My Father, if Thou wilt, remove this chalice from Me: nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done. And being in an agony, He prayed the longer" (Mark xiv. 32-36; Luke xxii. 43).

2nd Prelude. Let us transport ourselves in spirit to the Garden of Olives, situated at the foot of a hill to the east of Jerusalem, in sight of Mount Calvary. At the end of the garden flows the torrent Cedron: . . . the spot is solitary, and favourable to recollection. Let us imagine that by a special favour Jesus has allowed us to join His three disciples, to be witnesses of His prayer and of His agony.

3rd Prelude. O my Jesus, grant me grace to taste the bitterness of Thy profound sadness, and to conceive a true repentance for my sins, which were the cause of it.

1st Point. Consider the persons. Jesus, pale and trembling, and oppressed with sadness, but calm and submissive to the will of His Father. The Apostles; they are grieved at the state in which they behold their divine Master, but sleep overpowers them. The enemies of Jesus are watching; they are taking measures with the traitor Judas to ensure His death. All Heaven is attentive to the mysteries of sorrow which are about to commence for Jesus.

2nd and 3rd Points. Listen to the words and consider the actions. Jesus conducts His eleven Apostles to the Garden of Olives. Three only enter with Him. "My soul," He says to them, "is sorrowful even unto death, stay you here, and watch with Me" (Matt. xxvi. 38). Adorable Saviour, permit me to follow Thee to the place where Thou art going to pray. He goes forward to a grotto surrounded by olives; there He falls prostrate upon the ground. At the view of all the crimes, past, present, and future, which He is charged to expiate, —at the sight of my sins,—fear, terror, and the agonies of death fill His soul. "Father," He cries, "if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done" (Matt. xxvi. 39). He goes to His Apostles; He finds them asleep. Alas! how often have I not been insensible, like them, to the sufferings of my Saviour! He awakes them, and reproaches them tenderly: "What! can you not watch

one hour with Me." (Matt. xxvi. 40). Then, more touched with the danger that threatens His dear disciples than with the sufferings with which He is oppressed, He adds: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation" (Matt. xxvi. 41). He returns to His prayer, and repeats the same words; then goes back to His disciples. They are asleep again. He wakes them no more. He perseveres in His painful prayer. His sufferings redouble. A bloody sweat flows from His body to the earth. He faints. An angel comes, not to deliver Him from His sufferings, but to give Him strength to endure them.

4th Point. Who is He who suffers? He is the Creator of Heaven and earth, in Himself essentially happy; who works miracles to relieve pain. A single act of submission on His part would have sufficed to redeem the whole world: but it would not have been enough for His love.

5th Point. What does He suffer? Inconceivable torments, since they produce a bloody sweat, and it needed an angel to comfort Him.

6th Point. Why does He suffer? Because He is charged to atone for the sins of all men. He knows all their malice and their enormity. He foresees the uselessness of His sufferings for the greater number, and His grief becomes the more poignant.

7th Point. For whom does He suffer? For all men without exception; but for me in particular, the work of His hands, whom He has overwhelmed with His benefits: for my sins. He distinguishes them among all the rest, and particularly such and such a sin. What ought I not to do and suffer myself for a God who has thus suffered for my sins!

Colloquy with Jesus suffering. Let us beg of Him such a horror of sin as He Himself experienced; the desire to expiate it; the strength necessary, &c.

Resolutions. To produce frequent acts of contrition. Carefully to abstain from the smallest faults.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Aspiration. Rather let me die, Lord, than wilfully commit sin!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SECOND MEDITATION.

The same Subject.

Application of the Senses.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st, 2nd and 3rd Preludes, pages 16 and 17.

1st Point. Sight. Consider anew our agonising Saviour: the ground bathed with His bloody sweat; His disciples asleep. O my Jesus, do not abandon me to my own weakness; let me watch continually with Thee to comfort Thee.

2nd Point. Hearing. Hearken in the dead of the night to those stifled sobs, that voice of agony, whose accents are so piercing and so divine. What does it say? "Father, not My will, but Thine be done" (Luke xxii. 42).

3rd Point. Smell. We have here a perfume of myrrh presented to us, and at the same time an odour of bitterness. Let us penetrate our souls therewith, that so they may be preserved from all corruption.

4th Point. Taste. Let us taste in spirit of the grief of Jesus; let us beg of Him to give us admission into the depths of His Sacred Heart, that we may feel something of His fears, His confusion, His profound sadness; and to communicate to our hearts the gift of compunction, that we may weep for our sins, and compassionate His sufferings.

5th Point. Touch. Let us prostrate ourselves, and kiss the ground saturated with the tears and blood of our God. Let us presume to approach our lips to His moistened garments, and to His adorable Feet. Let us beg of Him to cause one single drop of the precious blood which He is shedding to fall on our souls, that it may soften and penetrate them with sorrow and love.

Colloquy, Resolutions, Offering of the Resolutions, Aspiration, Prayer, Examen of the Meditation, as in the preceding Contemplation.

THIRD MEDITATION.

CAUSE OF THE SORROWS OF JESUS IN THE GARDEN OF OLIVES.

"My soul is sorrowful, even unto death" (Mark xiv. 34).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Let us still represent to ourselves the Garden of Olives, the grotto, the darkness of the night, the pale light of the moon penetrating through the foliage of the trees and the clefts of the rocks; the weather calm and serene, but somewhat cold. Let us recollect ourselves profoundly.

2nd Prelude. God of my heart, deign to make me penetrate yet further into the depths of Thy Sacred Heart, that I may know the excess of Thy love and the greatness of Thy sufferings.

1st Point. Jesus suffers at the view of the sins of all mankind, with which He is laden, and of the torments by which He is to expiate them.

To understand what were the interior sufferings of Jesus in the Garden of Olives, we must understand to

what an extent He hated sin. Let us consider Him prostrate in the presence of His Father; while all the iniquities of the world, since the crime of Cain to the last sin that will ever be committed on the earth, present themselves before Him with all their malice and enormity. He beholds the murders, the immodesties, the sacrileges,—in a word, all the crimes of the greatest sinners. He sees, also, the infidelities of chosen souls, their resistance to grace, their cowardice in His service. He sees my sins also. He distinguishes them all, and each one of them contributes to make Him suffer. He beholds at the same time all the torments He must endure to expiate our misdeeds: the whips, the thorns, the nails, the cross—all the ignominies of His Passion vividly affect His imagination; He seems already to be suffering from their torments; His human nature is terrified, and sinks to the ground in agony. Lord, can I be insensible to the fearful sorrow which weighs down Thy divine soul! Ah! since my sins have reduced Thee to this state, grant that I may detest them with all my heart, and that I may rather die a thousand times than wilfully relapse into them any more.

2nd Point. Jesus suffers at the view of the number of souls who will not profit by His redemption.

Jesus casts a look through the course of all ages:—the years that have already passed, and those yet to come, pass in succession before His eyes. His divine intelligence distinguishes in them the birth, the life and death, and eternal destiny of every individual. He beholds among them, it is true, some who will apply to themselves the fruits of His precious blood; but He sees that the greater number will despise His proffered love, and lose themselves, despite all He will have done to save them; He sees those souls for whom He is going to die precipitate themselves in crowds into the eternal abysses of hell. This foresight is to Him infinitely more insupportable than all the torments which await Him; it causes Him to cry out, "My Father, if it be possible,

let this chalice pass from Me" (Matt. xxvi. 39). Behold to what an excess my Saviour has loved my soul, and the souls of all mankind! I ought, then, to avoid with the greatest care everything that would be likely to hinder my salvation, and I ought to labour to the utmost of my power to prevent the loss of my neighbour's soul.

Colloquy with Jesus suffering. Let us lay before Him our grief and our love. Let us unite, if possible, our tears to His, and endeavour to detest our sins with our whole heart. Let us beg of Him to imprint on our soul in indelible characters the remembrance of His mortal agony, and His horror of sin. Let us beg of Him also to make us know the value of a single soul, and what we ought to do to hinder it from being lost.

Resolutions. To make frequent acts of contrition. To labour for the salvation of souls as much as it shall be in our power.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Aspiration. Heart of Jesus, sorrowful even unto death in the Garden of Olives, keep me from all sin!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FOURTH MEDITATION.

Jesus in the Garden of Olives is the Model of Afflicted Souls.

"And kneeling, He made this prayer: My Father, if Thou wilt, remove this chalice from Me: nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done" (Luke xxii. 41, 42).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st and 2nd Preludes, page 20.

1st Point. It is permitted to those who suffer to seek relief under their pains.

Why did Jesus, that God so powerful, who upholds the universe, experience the weakness of human nature in His prayer in the garden? It was to console and encourage the weak. If He had constantly exhibited divine strength and unshaken intrepidity, His example would have seemed beyond our strength; but what excuse can dispense us from imitating it now that we have beheld Him thrown into an agony, and experiencing those interior combats which the approach of suffering causes in all men? He goes to seek consolation from His disciples, to teach us that we may confide our sorrows to a virtuous friend, in order to render them less bitter. He prays to His Father to deliver Him from the chalice He must drink, to show us that such requests are permitted, provided they be accompanied with submission to the divine will. What goodness, O my Jesus! Thy adorable Heart is indeed at once the heart of a father and mother for us; Thou hast had regard to our weakness, and hast vouchsafed that Thy divine example should be not only an instruction for the strong and perfect, but also a consolation for the weak and dejected. Ah! I am resolved not to give way in future under the pressure of afflictions. I have a Saviour who knows how to compassionate sorrows which He has Himself undergone. Into His Sacred Heart I will pour out my griefs, that I may draw thence the strength and courage I need.

2nd Point. Those who suffer ought to have recourse to prayer, humble themselves, and submit to the will of our Lord.

Jesus, overwhelmed with sorrow, perseveres for three hours in His painful prayer, and ceases not to repeat the same words. "My Father, if it be possible, remove this chalice from Me: nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done". Is it with the same dispositions, and, above all, with the same perseverance, that we have recourse to God in our troubles? Let us consider further the humility of this divine Saviour, who remains prostrate in the presence of His Father, and submits to be comforted by

an Angel—He who is the Lord of Angels, and the Source of all strength! In fine, He accepts the chalice which is presented to Him, and consents to suffer the torments of death. When the hand of the Lord weighs me down, and when, after having humbly begged to be delivered from my troubles, I do not experience the effect of my petition, I ought to submit to His holy will with love and resignation. O my Saviour! grant me grace to follow Thy example, and in all my sufferings to unite myself to Thy divine and perfect submission.

Colloquy with Jesus agonising. Let us beg of Him the grace to support in a Christian spirit all the trials of life; to be ever united to Him; to imitate His divine example; to love Him more and more, &c.

Resolution. To unite whatever pains we may have to endure to the interior sufferings of Jesus.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Aspiration. "Father, not My will, but Thine be done" (Luke xxii. 42).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTH MEDITATION.

Jesus Warns His Apostles to Watch and Pray.

"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation: the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. xxvi. 41).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 20.

2nd Prelude. Grant me, O Lord, the spirit of watchfulness and prayer, that I may avoid the dangers with which I am surrounded.

1st Point. The necessity of watching and praying.

"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation" (Matt. xxvi. 41). Our divine Saviour, full of sadness as He is, ceases not to occupy Himself with His disciples, and to warn them of the danger at hand which threatens them. "Watch and pray," He says to them. This salutary warning is not less necessary for us than for them: like them, we are weak, imprudent, presumptuous apart from danger, but timid to excess at the approach of it. We are exposed each moment to the attacks of all sorts of enemies, both visible and invisible, who at one time lay snares for us, and at another time set upon us openly; these enemies are superior to us in cleverness and strength, and we cannot resist them without help from on high. Let us, then, receive with respect this advice of our divine Master, and reduce it faithfully to practice; we cannot be without afflictions and temptations so long as we are in this world, as the *Imitation* says; for which reason we ought to watch in prayer, and carefully guard against whatever might be to us an occasion of sin, so that we may not come to fall into the snares of the spirit of darkness.

2nd Point. In what manner we ought to watch and pray.

"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Over what ought we to keep watch, at what time, and in what manner? We ought to watch over our senses, which are, as it were, the gates of our souls; but, above all, we ought to watch over our heart; for he who only avoids evil exteriorly and does not root it up will soon be tempted anew and with greater violence. We ought to watch always, but principally in the commencement of temptation, for it is far easier to overcome the enemy while he is yet weak than to resist him when he shall have almost made himself master of our whole soul. We must watch with a holy courage, accompanied with peace and confidence in God; for, says the author of the *Imitation* again, we surmount temptations more easily little by little through patience, and in humble expectation of the divine assistance, than by human impetuosity,

accompanied with sadness and vexation against oneself In fine, prayer must be united to vigilance. Fill me, O Lord, with a humble diffidence in myself, and a perfect confidence in Thee, and deign to replenish me with a spirit of prayer, that I may escape the dangers which surround me on all sides.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us beg of Him to help us to foresee our temptations, and to combat them. Let us promise Him to do all that depends on us, to respond to His grace, and to remain always faithful to Him.

Resolution. To watch with care over ourselves, that we may avoid the smallest faults, and often to raise our hearts to God begging His help.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Aspirations. "O Lord, come to my assistance" (Ps. lxix. 2). "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation" (Matt. xxvi. 41).

Prayer. Pater noster, &c.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SIXTH CONTEMPLATION.

Jesus betrayed with a Kiss.

1st Prelude. "Judas, one of the twelve, came; and with him a great multitude armed with swords and clubs. And he gave them a sign, saying: He whom I shall kiss, that is He. And immediately he came near to Jesus. And he kissed Him. Jesus said to him: Friend, for what art thou come hither?" (Matt. xxvi. 47-50).

2nd Prelude. Transport yourself, in spirit, to the Garden of Olives: a profound silence reigns in it. It is near midnight. Place yourself in a spot where you may see and hear all that passes.

3rd Prelude. O my dear Jesus, penetrate my soul with regret and confusion, since it is for my sins that Thou didst suffer such great outrages.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: Jesus full of ardour and courage; His Heart burns to suffer for us; kindness, gentleness, and peace are portrayed in His countenance. The Apostles, full of fear, are together at a little distance behind. Let us behold Judas surrounded by his company; their eyes are peering around. They carry lanterns, clubs, and swords: Jesus has no other arms than the ardour and force of His love for us.

2nd Point. Listen to the Words: the wicked conversation of Judas with those who accompany him: the sign which he gives them, "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is He; hold Him fast" (Matt. xxvi. 48). During this time Jesus speaks to His Father of our salvation, and encourages His Apostles. Judas advances towards His Master, salutes and embraces Him with the token of friendship. "My friend," Jesus sweetly says to him, "for what art thou come here?" "Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" (Matt. xxvi. 50; Luke xxii. 48). Words so full of kindness failed to soften that heart, so hardened against all the impressions of grace. Behold to what resistance to the voice of Jesus leads! But what goodness on the part of his divine Master to give Judas still the appellation of friend, and to be ready to grant him His pardon, had he been willing to receive it! Who would not have confidence in a Saviour so full of kindness and mercy?

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: the infamous treachery of the perfidious Apostle. How much it afflicts the loving Heart of Jesus! Consider, also, the goodness of this divine Master, who permits him to embrace Him, and speaks to him with kindness. O Sacred Heart of my Jesus, teach me to know Thee!

4th Point. Why would our Lord suffer this betrayal? His divine Heart had resolved to embrace all kinds of sufferings; and as nothing is sweeter to a sensible heart

than to confide its secrets to a friend, so nothing is harder or more bitter than to behold these same secrets shamefully betrayed and unfolded to its enemies. Jesus would endure this pain, to console those of His dear children who should have to suffer it after Him.

5th Point. Why did Jesus hide His divinity, and not annihilate all these wretches? Our purblind zeal leads us to ask Him this. Ah! His Sacred Heart replies, that we are ignorant of what it is to be a Father. O incomparable tenderness of the Heart of my Jesus!

6th Point. Since it is for me Jesus has suffered, as if I alone were in the world, I ought to understand that such love can only be requited by a similar return of love.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us make Him an honourable reparation for the outrages of sinners, and for our own ingratitude. Let us beg Him never to permit us to have the misfortune to resist His grace, or be deaf to His voice.

Resolutions. To endeavour to attain great purity of intention in all our actions. To make reparation to Jesus several times in the day by fervent aspirations of our heart to Him.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Aspiration. Lord, do not trust in me, for I am capable of betraying Thee.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SEVENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus delivers Himself up to His Enemies.

"Jesus, knowing all that would come to pass concerning Him, advanced towards the band, and said to them, Whom seek ye? They answered: Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said to them: I am He. As soon, therefore, as He had said to them, I am He, they went backward and fell to the ground. Again, therefore, He asketh them, Whom seek ye? and they said: Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered: I have already told you that I am He: since, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way" (John xviii. 4-8).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Let us represent to ourselves anew the entrance to the Garden of Olives: it is night, and objects can only be distinguished by the light of the moon and the glare of the torches.

2nd Prelude. Divine Jesus, make me penetrate into Thy Sacred Heart, to study therein the dispositions and feelings with which at this moment Thou didst deliver Thyself up for me to the fury of Thy enemies.

1st Point. Jesus delivers Himself up to death willingly.

The passage of the holy Gospel, which is the subject of this Meditation, proves, in the most striking manner, that the death of Jesus was voluntary. "Jesus, knowing all things that would come to pass, advanced towards the troop" (John xviii. 4). In similar circumstances, He had previously retired or rendered Himself invisible; now He advances towards those who wish to seize Him. He says to them: "Whom seek ye?"—"Jesus of Nazareth," they reply: upon which He answers, "I am He" (ver. 4, 5); and at these words they fall back to the ground with terror. But our divine Lord, far from retiring (which He could easily have done), allowed them to rise up again, and after having repeated His question, abandons Himself with the meekness of a lamb to their unjust violence.

Let us enter into the divine Heart of Jesus, and beg of Him to make known to us the sentiments which animate Him, and the motives through which He acts. Why that powerful word which overthrew the band? Why afterwards were His enemies enabled to capture Him so easily? Jesus works a miracle to open, if possible, the eyes of these blinded sinners: afterwards He allows Himself to be seized, because He desires to die for us. All in this divine Saviour is ever charity, meekness, and mercy. Divine Jesus, fill my heart with the sentiments with which these amiable attributes ought to inspire me. But it is not Thy will that I should stop at loving Thee; Thou desirest me to imitate Thee likewise by practising charity, zeal, generosity, and meekness. Help me, then, with Thy holy grace, and grant that my heart may become in all things like unto Thine.

2nd Point. Jesus watches over His own: nothing can happen without His permission.

"Since it is I whom ye seek, let these go their way" (John xviii. 8). The Apostles were destined to give testimony to the divinity of Jesus Christ, and to seal their testimony with their blood; but the moment marked out by the divine decrees had not yet come: they were not sufficiently prepared for this great sacrifice. Besides which, it entered into the views of Providence that they should perform many important works before leaving the world. It was for this reason that Jesus, when He gave Himself up to His enemies, deprived them of all power against His disciples. Be assured, timid Apostles, that Jesus, whose power is sovereign, will not permit you at this moment to fall into the hands of His murderers: the time of trial will come for you only when He shall have led the way, and merited for you the grace to walk with a firm step in the path He will trace out for you with His blood. O my Jesus! this conduct, so full of wisdom, Thou dost follow also in my regard. I am assured that if it shall please Thee to impose any painful sacrifice on me or ask

of me some generous effort, Thou wilt observe a suitable time; Thou wilt give me grace proportioned to my necessities,—in a word, Thou wilt regulate all for my greater good. Ah! I acknowledge that it would be ungrateful, and doing an injury to Thy Sacred Heart, so full of love, not to abandon myself to Thee with the most entire confidence. I renounce from my heart all fear and uneasiness, and place myself in Thy hands, that Thou mayest dispose of me according to Thy holy will.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore Him as the sovereign Master of all events, as the God full of bounty, who watches unceasingly over all His elect. Let us thank Him for having delivered Himself up for us to torments and death: He who by a single word could have confounded and annihilated His murderers. Let us place ourselves in His hands, and abandon ourselves entirely to Him. Let us ask of Him the graces necessary to prevent us from giving way to excessive fears, which are in many ways injurious to His Sacred Heart.

Resolutions. To banish from our heart all uneasiness and distrust. To follow faithfully and generously all the inspirations of grace.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Jesus gave Himself up to death because He willed it" (John x. 17, 18). "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend My spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46).

Prayer. Receive, O Lord, my liberty without reserve: deign to accept my memory, my understanding, and my will. I have nothing, I possess nothing, which is not the gift of Thy bounty. I give back all to Thee: I abandon all without reserve to Thy will, that Thou mayest dispose of all as it shall please Thee. All that I ask of Thee is Thy grace and Thy love: with these I shall be rich enough, and beg for nothing more.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

EIGHTH MEDITATION.

Flight of the Apostles.

"Then His disciples all leaving Him, fled" (Matt. xxvi. 56).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself anew the entrance to the Garden of Olives.

2nd Prelude. Preserve me, O Lord, from my own weakness, and never permit me to be so unhappy as to betray Thy cause through fear of Thy enemies.

1st Point. The flight of the Apostles afflicts the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Let us consider how sensibly the flight of the Apostles must have afflicted the susceptible and loving Heart of Jesus. For three years He had admitted them to the happiness of living with Him, and of following Him, wherever He went. He had continually overwhelmed them with the most precious and signal proofs of His love. Scarcely had a few hours passed since He had sealed His benefits by instituting for them the most august of all the Sacraments; He had spoken to them in the fulness of His Heart, like a good father on the point of quitting his dear children: and at the first appearance of danger they take flight and abandon Him. Shall we dare, after this, to complain of the inconstancy of our friends, or the ingratitude of those who refuse us a well-merited return for our benefits to them? Ah! if God should subject us to similar trials, let us learn of Jesus how we ought to support them. The Sacred Heart of our divine Saviour feels deeply the injury done to His love: but ever patient, meek, and constant in His immense charity, He gives Himself up to death for those who show themselves so unworthy of His affection. After His resurrection He deigns to call them His brethren; appears to them, and loads them

with new favours. Oh, the infinite treasures of the bounty and mercy of a God-Saviour who is all love!

2nd Point. The flight of the Apostles shows us what human weakness is.

The flight of the Apostles shows us to what the weakness of man may lead when he neglects to ask the all-powerful aid of Heaven. During three years the Apostles had witnessed the numerous and wonderful miracles of their divine Master; they had recognised and confessed His divinity; they loved Him; they had that very night made Him the most solemn protestations of fidelity; yet as soon as they behold His enemies lay their hands upon Him, instead of defending Him, or exposing themselves at least, through love, to share His fate, they basely take flight. Alas! have I not oftentimes myself experienced the dangerous frailty of human weakness? In the happy moments when Jesus spoke to my heart, and caused me to feel His divine presence, I have said to Him: "Thou art indeed my God," and have promised never to abandon Him. Yet, when the impious have blasphemed Him in my presence, when sinners have dared by their discourse to wound the virtues dearest to His Sacred Heart, what have I done to show my attachment to His cause, and my love for His person? O my Saviour! whence comes so much weakness in me? Thou tellest me in the depth of my heart that the twofold means of putting a stop to it is a humble diffidence in myself and a frequent turning to Thee. O Lord, I will for the future prove my fidelity by putting these means in practice: succour me, bless me, support me, and I will place my glory and my happiness in bearing for Thy sake all the railleries and contradictions of Thy enemies.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore Him as our Master and our God. Let us ask of Him grace to imitate all His divine virtues, and above all His immense charity. Let us beg Him to strengthen us against human respect, and to attach us inviolably to Himself.

Resolutions. Always to return great charity for any coldness or ingratitude of which I may have been the object. To brave human respect with courage when any occasion presents itself.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Lord, never suffer me to abandon Thee.

Prayer. Receive, O Lord, &c., page 31.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

NINTH MEDITATION.

Jesus bound and taken before the High-priest.

"Then the band and the tribune, and the servants of the Jews, took Jesus and bound Him; and they led Him away to Annas first. Annas sent Him to Caiphas the high-priest, where all the priests and the scribes and ancients assembled together" (John xviii. 12, 24; Mark xiv. 53).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself again the road from the Garden of Olives to Jerusalem, at night-time, and then the streets of that city.

2nd Prelude. Divine Saviour, who for love of me didst submit to be bound and led like a criminal, grant me grace to attach myself to Thee alone, and to depend in all things on Thy holy will.

1st Point. The example of Jesus engages us to practise obedience and submission.

Let us consider our divine Saviour bound with cords and dragged ignominiously to Jerusalem. Thus does He expiate our revolts against His divine will, and our pride, which has so often caused us to make a bad use of our liberty by despising His holy law. In this condition He preaches forcibly to us the necessity in which we are of submitting, for the love of Him, to those who

have authority over us, whatever it may cost our natural pride. After having contemplated this divine Lamb, the cords which bind Him, His meekness, His submission, can I not renounce for ever those desires of false liberty which have caused me to commit so many faults? He is the Son of God, and I am nothing but a weak creature. He is the Saint of Saints, and the number of my sins surpass those of my days. They dare to bind Him and take Him captive; they treat Him with injustice and inhumanity. He keeps silence, He obeys; and I will not submit when that which is required of me causes me a slight humiliation, or when I am ordered to do something in an imperious tone, to the cost of my pride. Surely I am not worthy of the dignified name of Christian, if the example of my Saviour does not make an impression on my heart strong enough to raise me above the pettinesses and susceptibilities of self-love, and to fill me with the true spirit of dependence and submission.

2nd Point. The example of Jesus teaches us with what an interior spirit our obedience and submission ought to be animated.

Let us again consider our adorable Saviour bound like a criminal, and dragged from street to street in the midst of insults and outrages. But let us not stop at the exterior of this first mystery of ignominy,—let us penetrate into the Heart of our divine Saviour. What does He think? what does He feel? He does not regard the injustice of His murderers, their hatred, or their malice: He bears in mind the justice alone of His Father, who smites Him as the Victim of sin, for which reason He submits to all with a patience and sweetness which no ill usage can overcome. If I am so easily made angry when others seem wanting in that respect which seems to me my due, it is because, unlike my divine Model, I fix my eyes on the creatures who offend me instead of elevating my mind by the light of faith towards God, who makes use of their bad dispositions to give me an oppor-

tunity of expiating my sins, and of acquiring the virtues wanting to me. Divine Jesus, form my heart upon Thine; fill me with a lively faith, which may become the rule of all my judgments, and with an ardent love, which may make me cherish and embrace all that may give me any resemblance to Thee.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us ask of Him the spirit of faith and love, and grace to imitate Him, to unite ourselves to Him, and to apply His merits to our souls.

Resolution. Not to be offended at anything; but, if others seem to treat us unjustly, to raise our heart to God, and receive this humiliation with submission, as coming from His hand.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. O Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto Thine!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TENTH CONTEMPLATION.

Jesus before Caiphas.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And the chief priests and the whole council sought false witness against Jesus, that they might put Him to death, and they found not. . . . The high-priest said to Him: I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us if Thou be Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith to him: Thou hast said it. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high-priest rent his garments, saying: . . . What further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy; What think you? But they answering, said, He is guilty of death" (Matt. xxvi. 59, 60, 63-66).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself the audience-chamber, where all the princes of the priests, the scribes and the Pharisees, are assembled.

3rd Prelude. Adorable Jesus! may Thy example inspire me with courage to render open testimony to justice and truth, even at the peril of my life.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: the princes of the priests, the scribes and the Pharisees, magnificently clothed and reclining on their couches. A ferocious joy is depicted on their countenances. Jesus is standing in the midst of them, bound like a criminal. His bearing bespeaks the most noble modesty, and His countenance the most perfect meekness. In the hall there are also servants and soldiers, who look at Him with an insolent curiosity.

2nd and 3rd Points. Listen to the Words and consider the Actions: the high-priest questions Jesus as to His disciples and doctrine. "I have spoken openly," said Jesus, "in secret I have spoken nothing; ask them who have heard." This wise answer remains without reply; but a servant, wishing to gain the favour of the judges by outraging the Object of their hatred, dares to stretch out his sacrilegious hand and inflict a blow on the adorable face of Jesus. "If," said our divine Lord to him with gentleness, "I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil; but if well, why strikest thou Me?" (John xviii. 23). Then several false witnesses presented themselves; but they could not agree in their statements. The high-priest impatiently rises up. "Answerest Thou nothing," he says, "to the things which these witness against Thee?" (Matt. xxvi. 62). But Jesus was silent. It was indeed useless to refute calumnies which destroyed each other by their manifest contradiction. Nevertheless, they desired He should speak; for they had resolved upon His death, and it was now only in His words that they hoped to find a pretext for His condemnation. For this reason the high-priest questions Him anew, saying: "I adjure Thee, by the

living God, to tell us if Thou art Christ, the Son of God" (Matt. xxvi. 63). Here let us recollect ourselves, and listen with the most profound respect to the reply of the King of Martyrs, of Him who was the first to give testimony of His own divinity, and sealed that testimony with His blood. "Thou hast said it; nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of Heaven" (Matt. xxvi. 64). I adore Thee, Jesus, my Saviour and my Master, as truly the Son of God; deign to receive the homage of a heart which is entirely Thine, and which would esteem itself happy to glorify Thee in the face of Heaven and earth, even at the sacrifice of life. Scarcely has Jesus spoken, when the high-priest rends His garments, exclaiming, "He hath blasphemed! what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy, what think you? And they all answering, said, He is guilty of death" (Matt. xxvi. 65, 66). Ah, how that sentence resounds in the depth of my heart! Yes, Jesus deserves death, because He is Christ, the Son of God, and has only come upon earth to expiate my sins! He will die to deliver me from eternal death; and shall I not return Him life for life? He dies for me; can I not live for Him?

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore Him, thank Him, return Him all the homage of respect, gratitude, and love of which we are capable, and ask of Him strength and courage to glorify Him, and to bear testimony to Him before His enemies.

Resolutions. To despise human respect. To offer all our actions to Jesus as so many acts of love and gratitude.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Lord, I believe that Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. Thou art my Saviour and my God.

Prayer. Receive, O Lord, &c., page 31.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

ELEVENTH CONTEMPLATION.

The Outrages offered to Jesus.—The Fall and Repentance of St. Peter.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "Then did they spit in His face, and having blindfolded Him, struck Him, saying: Prophesy unto us, O Christ, who is he that struck Thee? But Peter sat without in the court. And there came to him a servant-maid, saying: Thou also wast with Jesus the Galilean. But he denied it, saying: I know not what thou sayest. . . . Another maid saw him, and she said to them that were there: This man also was with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied it with an oath. And after a little while they came that stood by, and said again to Peter: Surely thou also art one of them. . . . Then he began to curse and to swear that he knew not the Man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus which He had said. . . . And going forth he wept bitterly" (Matt. xxvi. 67-75).

2nd Prelude. Let us represent to ourselves the house of the pontiff, the audience-hall where Jesus was outraged, the court where Peter stood warming himself with the servants.

3rd Prelude. Divine Jesus! penetrate me with Thy love, engrave in the depth of my heart the remembrance of Thy ignominies, and give me tears to weep for my sins, my cowardice, and my ingratitude towards Thee.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: the scribes and Pharisees have retired; they have gone to take their repose, leaving Jesus to the care of the soldiers and servants. There is no one left in the hall but our adorable Saviour, surrounded by a vile mob, who regard Him with an insulting air, and prepare to offer Him a thousand insults. In the court, the servants of the high-priest are warming themselves round a large fire. Peter is sitting in the midst of them. He has not been able to make up his mind entirely to leave his divine Master; he has

followed Him at a distance, wishing to know what would be the result of His capture. Happy would he have been had he joined humility and prayer to his love for his Master! But his presumption is about to become the cause of his fall.

2nd and 3rd Points. Listen to the Words, and consider the Actions: the servants of the high-priest begin to insult and outrage Jesus in the most shameful manner; they spit in His face, they buffet Him, striking Him severely; while the Lamb of God, the adorable Model of meekness and humility, offers not the least resistance. His divine hands are fastened, His eyes are cast down, His Sacred Heart is perfectly submissive. These cowardly and wicked wretches, incapable of being moved with so much patience, redouble their insolence and brutality; they blindfold Him, and ill-treat Him anew, saying with insulting mockery: "Prophesy unto us, O Christ, who is he that strikes Thee" (Matt. xxvi. 68). What does the loving Heart of my Jesus say during this infamous and sacrilegious amusement? "Father, forgive them" (Luke xxiii. 34). O incomprehensible meekness! And shall I, a disciple of Jesus, the privileged and cherished child of the Sacred Heart, be angry when others offend me? During this time Peter, who tries to listen and learn all that passes, is scanned attentively by a servant-maid. "Thou also wast," she says, "with Jesus of Nazareth" (Mark xiv. 67). Peter is troubled; all his courage abandons him. "I neither know," he says, trembling all over, "nor understand what thou sayest" (Mark xiv. 68); and, wishing to avoid a second questioning, he retires into the outer court. But as he was going out, another servant perceived him, and said to those around: "This man was also with Jesus" (Luke xxii. 56). And soon after, again a servant seeing him, said: "Art thou not one of His disciples?" (John xviii. 25). The terror of Peter increases with his danger, and his crime with his alarm. He

denies his divine Master anew, and affirms with an oath that he knows Him not. Then, thinking to have done away with all suspicion, his heart still keeping him near Jesus, whom he loves, although he has just denied Him, he remains in the same place; and in fact no further attention seems directed towards him. But about an hour after, a servant of the high-priest remembers having seen him in the garden, and another servant says positively that he is one of His disciples. They surround him. "Even thy speech," they exclaim, "doth discover thee to be a Galilean" (Matt. xxvi. 73). Peter, alarmed at this, curses and swears that he knows not Jesus. At this moment his divine Master passes through the court, led by the servants and soldiers, who continue to insult Him. He casts a look on His Apostle; their eyes meet. Oh, what a heartrending glance penetrates the soul of Peter! He remembers the words which his good Master had said to him: "This very night, before the cock crow, thou wilt deny Me thrice" (Matt. xxvi. 75). At the same instant his soul is pierced with the most bitter grief; he leaves the place, goes forth, and sheds torrents of tears. O holy Apostle! like you I have had the misfortune to wound the loving Heart of Jesus. Obtain for me a share of that deep and lively sorrow which lasted all your life; above all, obtain for me that penitent love which so advantageously repaired your fault. And thou, O my Saviour, show Thyself unto me in the same state in which Peter beheld Thee; Thy hands bound, Thy face disfigured with blows and covered with spittle; cast on me also a look of mercy; and may my heart, broken with sorrow and penetrated with love, no longer possess movement or life but to detest its offences and weep for its ingratitude.

4th Point. What does the divine Heart of Jesus suffer in this mystery? The most insupportable outrages from the servants; the pain of being denied by the chief of His Apostles. He feels all, even to His Heart's core; and it is for me that He suffers all.

5th Point. Not only is His Godhead veiled, but His adorable countenance is so disfigured by blows and spittle, that He is no longer to be recognised. Behold to what an excess of ignominy He whom the Angels adore has willed to descend for my sake!

6th Point. What ought I not to do and suffer for a Saviour who has so loved me?

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us ask of Him contrition, tears, conversion of heart, penitent love, &c. Let us pray to St. Peter to obtain these graces for us.

Resolutions. To make frequent acts of contrition and love. To distrust ourselves, and often pray to our Lord to preserve us from sin.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Cast on me a look of mercy, O Lord.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TWELFTH MEDITATION.

Fall and Repentance of St. Peter.

And the Lord turning, looked on Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord which He had said: Before the cock crow, thou wilt deny Me thrice. And going forth, he wept bitterly" (Luke xxii. 61, 62).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself anew the court, in which a large fire is lighted. Behold Peter in the midst of the servants, and Jesus bound, who casts on him a look full of love.

2nd Prelude. O my divine Jesus! penetrate my heart with sorrow, and engrave upon it in indelible characters the remembrance of Thy sorrow, of Thy love, and of my own infidelities.

1st Point. How afflicting the fall of Peter was to the loving Heart of Jesus!

"The Lord turning, looked on Peter" (Luke xxii. 61). What must have been the grief of Jesus when He heard Peter, the Apostle chosen by Him from amongst the others to receive from Him so many special favours,—Peter, whom He had constituted the head of His Church,—publicly deny Him, affirming with oaths and imprecations that he knew Him not! This affront grieved Him more than all the insults which He had just endured—it pierced His Heart with bitter grief! O Sacred Heart of my Jesus! have I never had the misfortune to renew this outrage? Thy enemies have treated Thy sacred mysteries, Thy holy religion, as well as Thy adorable Person, with derision and contempt. I have heard their horrible blasphemies; and if my heart had been attentive to Thy voice speaking within it, I should have known that the ignominies of Thy Passion were being renewed. Yet weakness and the fear of others have seized upon my soul: I have trembled like Peter at the voice of a worthless creature, and have feigned not to know my Saviour and my God. Pardon me, O divine Jesus, and have mercy on me. I have wounded Thy Heart: wound mine in return, and cause it to bring forth tears whose source may never be dried up.

2nd Point. How effectually the glance of Jesus pierced the heart of Peter!

"And Peter remembered the word of the Lord which He had said: Before the cock crow, thou wilt deny Me thrice. And going forth, he wept bitterly" (Luke xxii. 61, 62). Let us conceive, as far as it be possible, what Peter must have felt at the moment Jesus looked on him. He loved his divine Master; fear alone had forced from his lips this triple denial of his Lord. He beholds Him at the very moment he has just denied that he knows Him—and in what condition! Jesus casts an impressive look upon him, and immediately he feels the enormity of his ingratitude; the many kindnesses of Jesus present

themselves before him; he recalls to his mind at the same time the presumptuous promises which he had made that very night to Christ; he beholds the excess of ignominy with which his adorable Master is overwhelmed; he feels that he has himself just put the finishing stroke to His trials; his heart is oppressed with a thousand bitter feelings,—shame, regret, boundless grief at having offended the Object of his love, in His presence, and at the very moment when he ought to have consoled Him, quite weigh him down. He can no longer remain in the place that has witnessed his deplorable fall; he retires from it, and goes forth to give free vent to his tears. Shall I behold him weeping without imitating his repentance? Has Jesus less right to my fidelity than to Peter's? Have I offended Him less? O my Saviour! if this sad thought is not capable of softening my heart, what else will be able to overcome its hardness and insensibility? Ah, it requires a glance of Thy infinite mercy! Deign to bestow a look on me, divine Jesus, and work a prodigy of grace by triumphing over a prodigy of ingratitude.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us ask of Him, through the intercession of St. Peter, the grace of a true repentance, a sincere conversion, a horror of sin, the spirit of compunction, &c.

Resolutions. The same as in the preceding Contemplation.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy" (Ps. l. 1).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTEENTH MEDITATION.

Despair of Judas.

"Then Judas, who betrayed Him, seeing that He was condemned, repenting himself, brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and ancients, saying: I have sinned in betraying innocent blood. But they said: What is that to us? look thou to it. And casting down the pieces of silver in the Temple, he departed, and went and hanged himself with an halter" (Matt. xxvii. 3-5).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself anew the council-hall where the priests, the senators, and the ancients are assembled, and where the unhappy Judas goes to seek them.

2nd Prelude. I pray Thee, O Jesus, not only to preserve me from all despair, but also to grant me a special grace by which I may be enabled to make Thy divine Heart known to others, and teach them to hope in Thee.

1st Point. The despair of Judas.

Let us remark all the sentiments which a vestige of uprightness still excites in the soul of this miserable wretch: he acknowledges the heinousness of his crime, the consequences of which he had not at first foreseen; the most dread remorse fills his soul; he goes in search of the accomplices of his crime. "I have sinned," he cries out, "in betraying innocent blood." "What is that to us?" reply these cruel men; "look thou to it" (Matt. xxvii. 4). These words complete his despair. Could he have expected any others? The accomplices of a crime know not how to console or help those from whom they no longer expect anything. Oh, if the unhappy Judas had been willing to profit by the grace yet offered to him! If he had fully known the loving Heart of Jesus, or that of Mary! If he had but laid his remorse at the feet of that Master so full of compassion, or of that Mother of Mercy, his pardon had been certain.

But no; he only listens to his despairing thoughts, and without taking advice of any one, terminates his miserable life himself, and seals his own reprobation. Poor sinner! he was very unhappy in having forgotten the justice of God before committing his crime; but he was still more miserable to have forgotten His mercy after committing it.

2nd Point. How greatly the despair of Judas afflicted the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Jesus loved the unhappy Judas, as He loves all sinners, so long as final impenitence has not rendered their crimes unpardonable. He loved him, and was about to give His blood and His life to save him. He sincerely wished to forgive him, if on his part he had been willing to return to Him; and He saw him die in his sins. Adorable Heart of Jesus! Thou alone couldst tell us how much grief the reprobation of that soul cost Thee. Yes, it belongs to the divine Heart of Jesus to will the salvation of souls: that is the end of all His labours and sufferings: that His recompense, if we may use the expression. Are we, the privileged children of Jesus, admitted to the intimacy of His Sacred Heart, partakers of these sentiments? What do we feel when we hear of the loss of a soul? Does this great interest affect us as much as our self-love does? Ah! if, too full of ourselves, we do not yet love Jesus enough to make His interests our own, and console His divine Heart, let us blush for our insensibility, and labour, with the help of His grace, to overcome those inclinations which place obstacles to this lawful love. The Sacred Heart of our divine Master is rent asunder every time a soul falls into hell. We can prevent the loss of many. What a motive for fidelity and courage!

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore His infinite mercy; asking of Him the grace to share His sentiments of compassion and zeal for sinners; and begging Him, above all, to render our zeal efficacious, by deigning to make use of us to bring others back to Him.

Resolution. To offer up for the salvation of souls all our prayers and actions, and, above all, the acts of virtue which we endeavour to practise during the day.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "You who fear the Lord, hope in Him" (Eccl. ii. 9).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FOURTEENTH CONTEMPLATION.

JESUS IS LED TO PILATE, WHO DECLARES HIS INNOCENCE.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And when morning was come, all the chief priests and ancients of the people took counsel against Jesus, that they might put Him to death. And they brought Him bound, and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate, the governor. Pilate interrogated Him. He went back to the Jews, and said: I find no cause in this Man. But they were more earnest, saying: He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place. Then Pilate asked if He were a Galilean. And when he understood that He was of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him away to him" (Matt. xxvii. 1, 2; Luke xxiii. 3-7).

2nd Prelude. Transport yourself in spirit to the streets of Jerusalem, and go from the house of Caiphas to that of Pilate: stop before this latter; at its entrance is a grand marble staircase, which Jesus is about to ascend and descend many times, and which He will water with His blood.

3rd Prelude. Give me, O Jesus, understanding to penetrate all the mysteries hidden in the astounding scene which I am going to contemplate. Deign also, my divine Master, to make me draw from thence practical fruits of imitation.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: the chief priests and ancients assembled together early in the morning to condemn the Innocent: all who compose the council appear to be animated with the most diabolical fury. The adorable Jesus is led in bound. He is profoundly humiliated; but His modesty, and the calmness of His divine soul, which seems absorbed in holy recollection, surround His sacred Person with a something imposing and majestic. His enemies remark it not, for passion blinds them. A crowd of people have assembled, which continues to increase. Pilate appears in the outer court of his palace. He is a man of weak mind, attached to his own interests; his bearing and the expression of his countenance do not bespeak the noble intrepidity of an upright magistrate.

2nd and 3rd Points. Listen to the Words and consider the Actions: the disgraceful cabal of the heads of the nation; the confused murmurs of the crowd which accompanies Jesus; what questions are put, what answers and remarks are made, calculated to overwhelm with confusion Him who is the object of them; the first words of Pilate: "Of what do you accuse this Man?" (John xviii. 29); the vague and insufficient answer given him: "If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up to thee" (John xviii. 30). It is their hatred which speaks; Pilate understands this, and says: "Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law. The Jews reply: It is not lawful for us to put any man to death" (John xviii. 31). They speak truly: the sceptre has departed from the house of Judah. Several voices exclaim: "We have found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that He is Christ, the King" (Luke xxiii. 2). The first of these accusations is vague; the second is false; the third relates to what is true, but taken in a false sense. Jesus is questioned: "Art Thou the King of the Jews? My kingdom is not of this world; if it were, My servants would cer-

tainly strive that I should not be delivered into the hands of the Jews. Art Thou a King then? Thou sayest that I am a King; but My kingdom is not of this world" (John xviii. 36, 37). To this explanation, which acquitted Him of all suspicion of sedition, and proved the falseness of the accusations levelled against Him, Jesus adds: "For this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that loveth the truth heareth My voice" (John xviii. 37). Oh, the goodness of the Sacred Heart of Jesus! Pilate has not as yet lost all conscience and integrity. Our Lord tries to gain him; He causes some rays of light to shine before his eyes, to make him desire a still broader daylight. "What is truth? says Pilate" (John xviii. 38). This was the day of his visitation, had he awaited the answer! But he leaves Jesus, and goes back to the Jews. O my Jesus! I remain at Thy feet; bestow on me the answer for which Pilate would not wait. He gives it to us in the depth of our heart: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John xiv. 6). O Truth, who art my God, unite me to Thyself in Thy eternal charity! Pilate declares to the princes of the priests and the people: "I find no cause in Him" (John xviii. 38). Fresh calumnies are heard; Jesus is silent. Pilate questions Him a second time: "Behold in how many things they accuse Thee; answerest Thou nothing? But Jesus was still silent, so that the governor wondered exceedingly" (Matt. xxvii. 13, 14). He was not aware that Jesus, whose goodness had just enlightened his conscience, and offered him salvation, would afterwards allow him to dispense justice, without Himself defending a life which He had resolved to sacrifice for us. The clamour increases; Pilate is strangely troubled at it. He hears the name of Galilee mentioned; asks if Jesus is a Galilean; and learns that He belongs to Herod's jurisdiction; then, thinking to have found a means of quieting his conscience without compromising his interests, he sends Him to Herod.

4th Point. Jesus feels keenly the disgraceful proceedings of the Jews, and the outrages offered to Him. He is grieved at Pilate's infidelity to the solicitations of grace. He suffers, also, great bodily pains, resulting from the cruel night He has passed. But His divine Heart, more loving than ever, prays earnestly for the entire consummation of the sacrifice which is to save us.

5th Point. He entirely conceals His divinity; works no miracle; speaks not even one of those words whose superhuman wisdom has so often confounded His enemies.

6th Point. It is for our salvation He does all this: what shall we do to testify our gratitude to Him?

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore His profound wisdom and immense charity, and beg Him to attach us to Himself by the strongest bands of love, and to draw our hearts to the imitation of His virtues; above all, of that virtue of humility, founded on the spirit of sacrifice, which made Him allow Himself to be accused without opening His mouth to reply.

Resolution. For love of Jesus, not to excuse or justify myself without real necessity.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. O Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like Thine!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTEENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus at the Court of Herod.

"And Herod, seeing Jesus, was very glad; for he was desirous for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things of Him, and he hoped to see Him work some miracle. And he questioned Him in many things; but Jesus answered him not. And the chief priests and the scribes stood by, earnestly accusing Him. And Herod, with his army, set Him at nought, and mocked Him, putting on Him a white garment, and sent Him back to Pilate" (Luke xxiii. 8-11).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself the streets of Jerusalem; then the court of Herod—it is sumptuous; luxury and effeminacy reign therein.

2nd Prelude. Grant, O my Jesus, that penetrated with profound contempt for the world and all that it esteems, I may dread all that is opposed to Thy Spirit and to Thy adorable Heart.

1st Point. The court of Herod behaves according to the spirit of the world.

The spirit of the world is a spirit of pride, sensuality, curiosity, and contempt for grave and holy things; it pervaded the court of Herod. This voluptuous and bloodthirsty man wished to see Jesus; so the Gospel says. It was not that he desired to be instructed in Christ's doctrine, or to obtain any grace; but he hoped to see Him work a miracle which would serve as a diversion to him. He put many questions to Him; but Jesus answered him not. It would have been beneath the eternal wisdom to manifest Himself to a wicked king who would not understand Him. Herod, with all his court, seeing that Jesus spoke not, although the priests and the ancients continued to accuse Him, despised Him. Jesus revealed, however, two great wonders to their sight; the one of wisdom, the other of patience; but they were as pearls offered to swine who knew not their value. The world

sometimes admires the marvel and external show which are the attendants of virtue; but it is too giddy and too depraved to appreciate what there is in virtue more true and more solid. Thus Herod despised Jesus, and clothed Him, out of derision, in a white garment, which at that time was a fool's robe. Such is the judgment of the world! Oh, how just it is that we should profoundly despise it; that we should have a sovereign dread of its spirit, and of all that concerns it—pride, sensual gratification, frivolity, dissipation, &c.!

2nd Point. The spirit and conduct of Jesus are opposed to those of the world.

The spirit of Jesus is diametrically opposed to that of the world: it is a spirit of humility, of contempt for all that flatters the senses, of modesty, of wisdom and holy gravity. We find all these characteristics in the conduct of Jesus before Herod. He appears in that court covered with ignominy; and surely He rejoices at that moment to behold Himself in the state of abjection and suffering in which He is, because it is a contrast to that voluptuous and sensual court. His wisdom appears in His silence. Neither the word of truth nor the wonders of the divine power should serve for a diversion to the impious. His modest dignity changes not amidst the clamours that are raised against Him, nor beneath the robe of mockery with which He is clothed. Oh, how many lessons this robe teaches us! From it the Saints learnt that the folly of the cross is the only true wisdom, and that the wisdom of this world is the most consummate folly. Let us add another feature in which the spirit of the world contrasts with that of Jesus Christ. The first is selfish, unfeeling, and cruel. Had the court of Herod beheld in Jesus Christ simply a man, or even an idiot, ought it not to have been touched with compassion at the sight? Ought not a natural sense of uprightness alone to have told them that an innocent man, ill-used and oppressed, merited respect and protection? But justice and compassion are banished from hearts full of themselves, and given over

to sinful pleasures; the sufferings of an unfortunate fellow-creature are nothing, if they can but serve the purpose of a cruel amusement. The spirit of Jesus Christ, on the contrary, is generous, kind, and compassionate. This divine Saviour, insulted and outraged, thinks only of saving those who ill-treat Him thus at the expense of His own life. He suffers their injuries with divine meekness, and with charity so pure that there is no bitterness or anger in His Heart against them. Let us now descend into the depths of our own soul. What spirit animates us? It is, indeed, not that of the world in all its extent; but are we fully filled with the spirit of Jesus?

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore Him beneath that robe of scorn with which He lets Himself be clothed for us. Let us make Him loving reparation for the injuries He receives, and thank Him for all that He endures for our salvation. Let us beg of Him the plenitude of His spirit, and the grace to imitate Him in that divine folly which renders Him an object of contempt to a wicked world, incapable of relishing the things of God.

Resolution. To produce as many interior and exterior acts of humility as we possibly can.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Just Father, the world hath not known Thee" (John xvii. 25).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SIXTEENTH CONTEMPLATION.

APPLICATION OF THE SENSES.—JESUS BEFORE HEROD.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And Herod, seeing Jesus, was very glad, for he was desirous for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things of Him, and he hoped to see some sign

wrought by Him. And he questioned Him in many things, but Jesus answered him not. And the chief priests and the ancients stood by, earnestly accusing Him. And Herod, with his army, set Him at nought, and mocking Him, put on Him a white robe, and sent Him back to Pilate" (Luke xxiii. 8-11).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself the streets of Jerusalem; then the court of Herod—it is magnificent: uxury and vice pervade it.

3rd Prelude. I beg of Thee, O my Jesus, to penetrate my heart more and more with contempt for the spirit of the world, and to discover to me the glory and wisdom of Thy divine humiliations.

1st Point. Sight. Herod and his court making a barbarous amusement of insulting Jesus Christ. How scornful and insolent their look! How contemptible and coarse their manners! Our divine Saviour receives all with meekness, humility, and modesty. Afterwards they parade Him through the streets clothed with a robe of ignominy, like some fool or impostor whose deceptions have just been discovered. He is a spectacle to Heaven and earth. His Heavenly Father delights in Him; the Angels admire and adore Him; His enemies rejoice at His confusion; Herod and his court despise Him;—and what are our sentiments?

2nd Point. Hearing. Let us listen to the bitter raillery and insulting jests of which Jesus is the object; the outcries of the wicked, the loud bursts of laughter, and the silence of Jesus. Alas! and similar outrages are renewed every day. Have we never joined in those impious conversations in which religion and the disciples of Jesus are treated with the greatest indignity? in which all that hatred can collect of fiendish misrepresentation, all that false wit can devise of what is ridiculous, is united to disfigure in the eyes of a giddy and ignorant multitude the things of God. Then the crowd laughs because it beholds others do so: it does not dare to refuse to imitate those of whose approval it is ambitious and whose criticism it dreads. And it is at Jesus out-

raged, calumniated, and suffering that it laughs! What ought to be, under such circumstances, the conduct of those who love Him? Ah! if they have not the courage to share the affronts of their Master, they should retire. O God! what a finishing stroke to the outrages of their Saviour, if these should join with His enemies in covering Him with ignominy—these who pass for knowing Him, and do really know Him.

3rd Point. Smell. Let us inhale the penetrating odour of the humiliations and humility of Jesus: an odour of eternal life which has drawn so many Saints to His retinue. Let us also inhale in spirit the fetid odour of wickedness, dissipation, and dissolute mirth which pervades the court of Herod: it is an air of corruption which ought to horrify us.

4th Point. Taste. Let us penetrate into the depths of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and there taste interiorly of the sentiments produced in Him by the ignominy with which He is covered. They are feelings of bitterness. He experiences all that is most revolting to human nature by calumnies, insults, injuries, and affronts. But, at the same time, His feelings are those of the greatest meekness, because He considers only the glory of His Father, our advantage, His love for us. Humiliation, from whatever quarter it may come to us, is bitter at first; but if it be accepted for God—if, for love of Him, we overcome and subdue the interior revolt it excites—it is followed by great peace, or rather it is changed into a fruit of happiness, according to the promise of our Lord: "To him that overcometh I will give to eat of the tree of life" (Apoc. ii. 7).

5th Point. Touch. Let us kiss respectfully that robe which convinces the wisdom of this world of folly; let us desire to be clothed with that robe. The true disciples of Jesus ought to glory in wearing it in the midst of this world. This robe is the modesty of Jesus, the simplicity of Jesus, His innocence, His gravity, the clothing of holiness which this world so often contemns,

but which in the eyes of Angels is the most beautiful and precious adornment.

Colloquy with our divine Model. Let us adore Him in union with the Angels in that deep humiliation which conceals His divinity. Let us offer Him the just tribute of gratitude. Let us ask of Him the grace to confound as He did the pride of the world, by a holy folly, which may lead us to defy its judgments and its contradictions, and to remain faithful to the Cross.

Resolutions. To avoid places and assemblies where Jesus is not respected; or if our duty compel us to be present in them, to glory in showing ourselves His true disciples.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Heart of Jesus, saturated with opprobrium, have mercy on us!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SEVENTEENTH CONTEMPLATION.

Jesus taken a second time before Pilate, compared with Barabbas, and condemned.

1st Prelude. "And Pilate, calling together the chief priests and the magistrates and the people, said to them: You have presented unto me this Man. I have examined Him, and I find no cause in Him. No, nor Herod neither. But you have a custom that I should release one unto you at the Pasch; will you, therefore, that I release unto you Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ? But they cried out, Not this Man, but Barabbas. And Pilate said to them again, What, then, shall I do with the King of the Jews? But they cried out all together, Let Him be crucified, let Him be crucified!" (Luke xxiii. 13-21; Matt. xxvii. 17-23).

2nd Prelude. Figure to yourself anew the streets of Jerusalem and the palace of Pilate.

3rd Prelude. O Jesus, grant that I may draw from this Meditation an intimate knowledge of Thy Sacred Heart, an extreme distrust of my own weakness, and a lively horror of human passions.

1st Point. Consider the Persons, and endeavour to form a just idea of their dispositions. Pilate: he is thoughtful and absent-minded; a terrible combat is going on between his conscience and the fear of losing his position. The accusers of Jesus: their look is dark and cruel, their malice black and premeditated. The people: curiosity, idleness, the desire to hear something new and extraordinary, has attracted the crowd; it is ready to believe without examination whatever it hears, and to receive without reason any impression given it. Fatal disposition, which is about to render it culpable of Deicide! The adorable Jesus: let us above all consider Him attentively, but much more with our heart than with our eyes; ever the same modest serenity in His countenance, the same tranquillity in His deportment, the same recollection, the same submission, the same charity in His loving Heart.

2nd Point. Consider the Words: what is Pilate about to say---he who with the authority of a single word can save Him whose innocence He has acknowledged? He begins by remonstrating: You have presented unto me this Man as perverting the nation, and behold I have examined Him before you, and find no cause in Him. No, nor Herod neither. This harangue is not approved of; he perceives it, and adds, "I will chastise Him, therefore, and let Him go" (Luke xxiii. 16). Unhappy coward! why chastise Him if He be innocent? This first concession, far from satisfying the enemies of Jesus, only serves to embolden them, since by it they discover the weakness of Pilate. The latter thinks of another expedient: "You have a custom that I should release one unto you at the Pasch; will you, therefore, that I release unto you Barabbas, or Jesus that is called Christ?" (Matt. xxvii. 17). The more odious the comparison, the

more suitable he judges it for his purpose. The offer is not addressed to the priests and senators, whose hatred is well known to him, but to the people who have received such numberless and recent benefits from Jesus. Whilst he is awaiting the reply, his wife sends to him, saying, "Have thou nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him" (Matt. xxvii. 19). O Pilate! this is a warning from Heaven which unites itself to the voice of thy conscience. A loud murmur has, however, run through the crowd. Satan, by the voice of the priests and the scribes, has inspired the people; a loud cry arises, "Away with this Man, and release unto us Barabbas" (Luke xxiii. 18). Pilate, in astonishment, exclaims, "What, then, shall I do with Jesus, that is called Christ? Crucify Him! crucify Him! But what evil hath He done? I find no cause in Him. Let Him be crucified! let Him be crucified!" (Mark xv. 12-14; Luke xxiii. 22). Pilate causes water to be brought in: "I am innocent," he says, "of the blood of this just Man" (Matt. xxvii. 24). No, Pilate, thou art not innocent; a man shares in a crime which he allows to be perpetrated when he can and ought to prevent it. "Look you to it," he adds (Matt. xxvii. 24). At the same instant the people cry out as with one voice, "His blood be upon us and upon our children" (Matt. xxvii. 25). The echo of that horrible imprecation resounds even to Heaven itself; God the Father ratifies it.

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: the cowardly conduct of Pilate; the fury of the enemies of Jesus; the wild excitement of the people; the empty ceremony of the washing of hands; the deliverance of Barabbas; and the silence of Jesus.

4th Point. The divine Jesus feels deeply the injustice done Him: the affront put upon Him by the odious comparison between Him and Barabbas covers Him with confusion. But that which grieves Him yet more acutely

is the infidelity and ruin of Pilate, and the sentence of reprobation which the Jews pronounce against themselves.

5th Point. Consider how the divinity of Jesus conceals itself, letting His cruel enemies do what they like, and sparing them.

6th Point. What should we not do and suffer for a God who loves us so much?

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore Him the more profoundly, the more He humbles Himself for us. Let us show Him our gratitude. Let us beg of Him to support our weakness, and also to preserve us from the misfortune of betraying our conscience. Let us ask of Him a lively horror of sin, and above all an ardent and practical love, which may draw us to Him by causing us to imitate Him.

Resolution. To follow with the greatest fidelity every inspiration of our conscience.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "My friends and relations have risen up against me" (Ps. xxxvii. 12).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

EIGHTEENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus compared to Barabbas.

"Now upon the solemn day the governor was accustomed to release to the people one prisoner, whom they would. And he had then a notorious prisoner named Barabbas. They, therefore, being assembled together, Pilate said, Which will you that I release unto you, Barabbas, or Jesus that is called Christ? But the chief priests and the ancients persuaded the people, that they should ask Barabbas, and make Jesus away. They answered then, Barabbas. Pilate saith to them, What shall I do, then, with Jesus? They all cry out, Let Him be crucified!" (Matt. xxvii. 15 *seqq.*)

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself again Jerusalem and the place where the governor's palace is situated.

2nd Prelude. O Jesus! never suffer me to have the misfortune to compare Thee in my heart with any creature whatever.

1st Point. Jesus is compared to Barabbas.

This comparison is for Him the height of ignominy. Every species of insult is employed against our adorable Saviour, who offers Himself to cure the wound of our pride; already He has been calumniated, covered with blows and spittle, inhumanly bound and dragged from street to street, like some wicked malefactor: at the court of Herod He was treated as a fool; and now with whom is He compared? With a wretched criminal, stained with crime, a thief, a rebel, an assassin, a man whose liberty is a scourge to the nation, a monster of iniquity in whom every vice is to be found! Such is the man preferred before Jesus! how humiliating, how degrading! Shall we dare to complain if after this we are held in little esteem, if our talents or services are not appreciated, or if others are unjustly preferred before us? Jesus, our divine Model, is "the reproach of men and the outcast of the people" (Ps. xxi. 7). "He is a worm, and no man" (Ps. xxi. 7), on whom every one can tread with impunity. His Sacred Heart, which longed, with a vehement desire, for humiliation and opprobrium, is at length satisfied; a superabundance of ignominies covers, penetrates, and overwhelms Him. "The disciple is not greater than his Master" (Matt. x. 24). If Jesus has been thus humbled and ignored, is it not just that we should at least accept willingly the trifling humiliations which His Providence sends us?

2nd Point. Why is Barabbas preferred to Jesus?

Three sorts of persons offer Jesus the atrocious insult of preferring Barabbas to Him: His enemies, because hatred blinds them, passion carries them away, and they are resolved to make away with Him at any price. The people, because, giddy and thoughtless, they have forgotten His benefits—indifference stifles in them both love and gratitude. Without consideration, they

follow blindly the impression given them; they are too imprudent to foresee the results of their unworthy choice. Pilate also partakes in this injustice; nevertheless, he is neither blind, nor prejudiced, nor misguided, but he is a coward, and the fear of man impels him to act against his conscience. Three sorts of sinners still daily prefer to Jesus, not any creature, but some empty interest or passing baneful gratification. The first, through dark malice and formal hatred of His person and religion: these are the fewest in number. The second, because they knew Him little, and love Him still less; and being sufficiently ungrateful to despise His goodness and forget His gifts, they are also senseless enough to irritate His justice and provoke His vengeance: the crowd of this class of sinners is without number; it forms the mass of the people. Lastly, the third class is made up of those who, enlightened like Pilate, and even more than Pilate, as to the innocence and merits of Jesus; fascinated with the charms of virtue; enticed to follow it; allow themselves to be intimidated by cowardly human respect, and dishonour by their works Him whom, in their mind and heart, they judge worthy of their every homage. Let us withdraw into the depths of our soul: have we never belonged to any of these three classes of persons? Penetrated with the most lively sorrow at the sight of the many outrages which Jesus has received from us, and still continues to receive every day from the many souls He has so tenderly loved, let us from a sense of justice devote ourselves generously to repair His glory outraged in His love for us.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us render Him a tribute of adoration, love, and gratitude, which shall equal, if possible, the depth of the ignominy to which He submitted for us. Let us make Him reparation for our own offences and those of all sinners. Let us beg of Him never to allow us to prefer the interests of our passions before Him,—an unworthy preference,

which would wound Him, if deliberately given, even in the least things.

Resolutions. To produce as many acts of humility as we shall have it in our power; to perform them in union with our Lord, and in a spirit of reparation. To watch and pray, lest we injure our Lord by any unworthy preference.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Heart of Jesus, filled with reproaches, have mercy on us!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

NINETEENTH MEDITATION.

The Scourging of our Lord.

"Then, therefore, Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him" (John xix. 1).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself the hall of the pretorium: everything is ready there for the scourging of our Lord. The balustrade which surrounds it is lined with an immense crowd of people, gathered together to witness the execution. In the centre is a block of marble in the form of a pedestal; at the top of which an iron ring may be seen, intended to make fast the Sufferer.

2nd Prelude. O Jesus, what a profound mystery I am undertaking to meditate! Grant me, more than ever, light and grace, that I may draw from it that hidden manna with which Thy Saints knew how to strengthen themselves, and which made the most bitter sufferings sweet to them.

1st Point. The torment prepared for Jesus is both ignominious and cruel.

In contemplating the adorable Jesus shamefully calumniated, insulted, outraged, despised, and at length compared to a vile criminal, we have, perhaps, thought Him arrived at the lowest degree of ignominy to which His love would be willing to descend for us,—but let us undeceive ourselves: a new and deeper scene of degradation is about to unfold itself to our view. Let us enter the hall of the pretorium: a pillar, executioners, and scourges await Him there. A numberless concourse are assembled together to feast upon His ignominy. His sufferings will be equal to His shame. A storm of blows is about to fall on His sacred body. His blood will flow fast; His flesh will be torn to pieces; the deep wounds which will furrow His body all over will be so profound that "His bones will be numbered" (Ps. xxi. 18). O Jesus, what an incomprehensible mystery! Why, then, O my Beloved, art Thou "like unto a man who has trodden the wine-press"? (Is. lxiii. 2). That is a mystery of love about to be revealed to us; let us earnestly beg of this divine Spouse of pure souls to bestow on us a virginal mind and heart, that we may be able to enter into the depths of this mystery.

2nd Point. Why would Jesus endure this torture?

Jesus detests every vice which can sully the heart of man, but there is one above all others for which He has a sovereign horror; a vice so dreadful, so essentially incompatible with Him, that His Spirit cannot dwell in hearts infected with it; a vice whose name alone would stain the lips of a Christian, would cause a pure heart to shudder and recoil with horror, and close chaste ears even to its very sound. It is of this vice in particular that the bloody pillar and torn flesh of our Lord speaks. O divine Blood, Thou art the "pure wine without dregs which engenders and brings forth virgins" (Zach. ix. 17) in every age; all the heavenly favours which have preserved or restored to us purity of heart are produced by Thy fruitfulness. Oh, what

sacred obligations of love, gratitude, and imitation Thou imposest on us to-day!

Colloquy with our adorable Master. Let us testify to Him all the sentiments of compassion, love, and gratitude wherewith the state to which we behold Him reduced inspires us. Let us beg of Him to replenish us with His Spirit, that, comprehending the value of the grace which He has merited for us by so many sufferings, we may be constantly faithful to preserve it by a continued guard over our senses, and the practice of well-regulated mortification.

Resolutions. To keep watch over my exterior. To guard my eyes, or impose on myself some other practice of watchfulness or mortification.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Jesus, Purity of virgins, have mercy on us.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TWENTIETH CONTEMPLATION.

The same Subject.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "Then, therefore, Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him" (John xix. 1).

2nd Prelude. Let us represent to ourselves anew that spacious hall, the crowd which throngs it, and the pillar to which Jesus is about to be fastened.

3rd Prelude. O my Jesus, grant me understanding, that, fathoming this great mystery of suffering and abasement, I may draw from it practical fruits of love, gratitude, and imitation.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: the crowd surrounding the entire hall; it increases, is all excitement,

and presses forward: on every countenance a savage curiosity is depicted. The executioners are making preparations; their movements speak their natural barbarity, which on this occasion is redoubled by the secret agency of the infernal spirits. The adorable Jesus appears, led out by officers of justice. He is "white and ruddy" (Cant. v. 10). *White*,—for the fool's garment with which Herod had Him clothed has not yet been taken off. *Ruddy* He begins to be through the shame which covers Him: soon, His entire body will be reddened by the dreadful wounds with which it will be torn.

2nd Point. Listen to the Words: at first a confused murmur runs through the crowd. Soon may be heard the exclamation, He comes! Listen, O my soul! "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh" (Matt. xxv. 6). He approaches, and speaks in the depths of His soul those words which He has already so often repeated: "Behold, I come to do Thy will, O my God" (Heb. x. 7-9).

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: the executioners order Jesus to divest Himself of His clothes. He obeys with the meekness of a lamb. Good God! what a spectacle! The Victim is fastened to the frightful column. The cruel flagellation is commenced. The blood flows. The blows are redoubled. The flesh of my Saviour is torn in pieces; His bones are laid bare, and yet the executioners continue to strike! At length, one of them, seeing Him on the point of expiring, cuts the cords, and Jesus falls bathed in His blood. He would never have risen from the ground had not His love called forth His divine power, and miraculously preserved His life; sustaining it for yet greater torments.

4th Point. What does the adorable Jesus suffer in this mystery of agony? It would be much easier to speak of what He does not suffer. His body is one entire wound: but, above all, His confusion is extreme. Thus does He expiate sins we have committed, sins most revolting to His Sacred Heart.

5th Point. The divinity is veiled: it is the hour of the powers of darkness.

6th Point. It is in this mystery that a Louis Gonzaga, a Stanislas Kostka, and so many others, have learned the secrets of those innocent cruelties which they carried to such lengths. What does the Spouse of our heart demand of us? Let us beware of guiding ourselves in this respect: "Obedience is better than sacrifice" (1 Kings xv. 22).

Colloquy with Jesus suffering. Let us offer Him our homage of adoration and love. Let us make Him reparation for so many outrages. Let us beg Him to give us the full benefit of the blood which He shed for us at the pillar, by delivering us from the slavery of the senses, that we may live by His Spirit, which is a Spirit of purity and love.

Resolutions, Offering of the Resolutions, Spiritual Bouquet, Prayer, and *Examen of the Meditation,* as before, page 64.

TWENTY-FIRST MEDITATION.

THE SAME SUBJECT.—APPLICATION OF THE SENSES.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

Preludes. The same as in the preceding Contemplation, page 64.

1st Point. Sight. Let us view, one after the other, all the objects contained in the hall after the cruel flagellation: the pillar still streaming with the precious blood of Jesus; those cords with which His divine hands were only just now bound; those rods and scourges armed with sharp points; the executioners tired out; the multitude still thirsting for the blood of the sacred Victim; the Lamb of God awaiting with unruffled calm the consummation of His painful sacrifice. He has put on His clothes again. What a covering for wounds so deep!

2nd Point. Hearing. Hearken to the confused noise of the crowd: of whom does it speak? and in what terms? What remarks, what mockeries, what insults! more humiliating than the infamous punishment itself! Jesus is silent: but what is the secret language uttered by His adorable Heart? O my Jesus, speak one word to my heart—"I have loved Thee with an everlasting love!" (Jerem. xxxi. 3).

3rd Point. Smell. "Thy blood, O Jesus, is as perfumed oil poured forth; therefore have young virgins loved Thee" (Cant. i. 2). For this reason shall the penitent soul say to Thee with confidence: "Draw me; we will run after the odour of Thy perfumes" (Cant. i. 3). Penetrate us with these saving odours, which are about to fill the whole earth to purify it, and to ascend even to Heaven to call down on us the divine mercy.

4th Point. Taste. What is there here to taste? A mixture of grief, of shame, of mercy, of zeal, of love, with which the Sacred Heart of Jesus is filled; the delicious sweetness of that divine purity whose source has just been opened to us. Oh, how all this contrasts with the frightful brutality of those monsters who are here present with sin and rage in their hearts!

5th Point. Touch. What objects have we to touch? Oh, how many we may find here to nourish a tender and respectful devotion! How holy is that pillar, and how worthy of veneration that ground, bathed, with the blood of God! Who would not bow down with respect and kiss that ground, and endeavour to partake of that sacred blood and treasure it in his own heart? What shall we do with the other frightful evidences of the severity of the torments our divine Master has endured for us? All the instruments of the scourging are still there. But there is present another object more worthy of attracting our attention—it is Jesus Himself. He is weak and faint, and seeks support; let us offer Him our heart.

Colloquy, Resolutions, Offering of the Resolutions, Spiritual Bouquet, Prayer, and *Examen of the Meditation,* as before, page 54.

TWENTY-SECOND MEDITATION.

Jesus Clothed with the Purple Garment.

"Then the soldiers, taking Jesus into the hall, gathered together unto Him the whole band; and, stripping Him, they put a scarlet cloak about Him" (Matt. xxvii. 27, 28).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself the spacious hall of the pretorium, in which an immense multitude is assembled.

2nd Prelude. O my Jesus, I implore of Thee, by the cruel stripping off of Thy garments which caused Thee so much pain, to denude me entirely of the old man, that I may no longer live but in Thee and according to Thy Spirit.

1st Point. How painful to our Lord is this taking off of His garments!

Scarcely has Jesus replaced His clothing, when it is again torn off Him with violence, that He may be clothed in an old purple garment, to make Him, out of derision, a sort of mock king. How acute must have been the sufferings He then endured! We know how painful a wound is when touched even gently, especially if it be large and deep: the wounds of Jesus are so frightful that they cover His divine body from head to foot. It is difficult to understand how the soldiers of the pretorium could have been so unfeeling and barbarous as to treat with so much cruelty the meekest of the children of men, who had never done them any harm. But what is still more unintelligible is the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which led Him to embrace so much suffering for us at a time when we were His enemies. Let us beg of Him to discover to us the depth of that love, and the extent of the gratitude to which it obliges us.

2nd Point. Jesus, divested of His clothing, is for us a source of instruction and grace.

Man, in committing sin, lost the robe of innocence, and offered to the view of God and His Angels nothing but the hideous wounds that the demon had inflicted upon him. It is to repair this misfortune that Jesus now permits His clothes to be torn off His wounded shoulders. Let us contemplate this divine Lamb, bathed in His blood, and let us remember that He is our Model. He has merited for us the grace to put off the Old Man; but this cannot be achieved without conflict, without painful combats and sufferings: let us, then, encourage ourselves, by the example of His torments, to drive the sword of Christian mortification even to the bottom of our heart, if necessary; to sever from our heart all corrupt or dangerous inclinations which may hinder His holy love from possessing it entirely. Adorable Saviour, it is for love of me that Thou didst suffer this most cruel torment; how can I be so unfeeling as not to be moved at it? How can I do otherwise than love Thee? How can I refuse to embrace, for love of Thee, the practice of this holy abandonment, which must apply Thy merits to me by making me imitate Thy example? No, my Jesus, I will no longer neglect it; I will combat courageously, sure of Thy aid, of the victory, and of Thy eternal recompense.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us thank Him for all He has done for us, and humble ourselves for the little gratitude we have shown, and the little zeal we have had up to the present to supply in ourselves "what is wanting in the sufferings of our Lord"; according to the expression of the Apostle Paul (Coloss. i. 24). Let us promise Jesus to labour henceforth unceasingly to divest ourselves of our vices and bad inclinations, that we may clothe ourselves anew with His virtues and Spirit. Let us ask of Him the necessary graces.

Resolution. To combat vigorously our predominant passion, with a view of putting off the Old Man, and clothing ourselves with the New.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "If any one will be My disciple, let him deny himself" (Matt. xvi. 24). "Put off the old man, and clothe yourself with the new man" (Coloss. iii. 9-10).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TWENTY-THIRD MEDITATION.

Jesus Crowned with Thorns.

"And the soldiers, plaiting a crown of thorns, put it upon His head" (John xix. 2).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 68.

2nd Prelude. Divine Jesus apply the merits of Thy sufferings to my soul, and grant that through love of Thee I may imitate Thee.

1st Point. Jesus crowned with thorns is our King and our Redeemer.

"And the soldiers, plaiting a crown of thorns, put it upon His head" (John xix. 2). Behold a new kind of torment chosen to distinguish the King of Martyrs and the Head of the elect! This torment was reserved for Jesus alone; no one else ever had endured or ever will endure it. It was inflicted on Him on account of His title of King of Israel being the cause of His condemnation: and divine Providence willed to secrete beneath that cruel and ignominious circumstance of His Passion the mystery of His true royalty, and the most important lessons. Let us contemplate our divine Master, His Head pierced with long and sharp thorns, and His face bathed in blood. The pain which He endures is inconceivable, and it is for us that He has taken the suffering upon Him. It is to snatch us from the tyranny of hell and the slavery of sin that He has willed to wear that bloody crown; on that condition He expiated our sins of thought,

our ambitious projects, and the criminal vanity of so many senseless mortals, who bedizen their head as an idol in order to attract guilty admiration. O Jesus! O my King! how much has it not cost Thee to cancel the debts due by me to Thy Father's justice! The fearful severity of Thy torments tells me of the immensity of Thy love. Ah! never permit me to be so unhappy as to throw off Thy lovable and lawful dominion over me, in order to rivet on me anew the chains that Thou hast broken at the price of so many sufferings.

2nd Point. Jesus crowned with thorns is our Model.

"And the soldiers, plaiting a crown of thorns, put it upon His head" (John xix. 2). In meditating on the sufferings of Jesus, let us not forget that He is our Model. We are destined to reign with Him; but it is only after having participated in His sufferings that we shall share in His glory. Let us, then, treasure up with a holy respect the lessons given us in this sad spectacle. Jesus is a King, but His crown is painful and bloody. We ourselves are destined also to reign, but it must be through combats and sufferings. We must reign over our own *heart*, by subjugating and mastering its inclinations—over the *world*, by despising its vain illusions and braving its persecutions—over *hell*, by triumphing courageously over all its attacks. O my Jesus, my Saviour, my Sovereign, my Master and Support! how shall I fear the combat when I behold Thee sustain the conflict with so much generosity and constancy! Love caused Thee to accept the cruel crown which pierced Thy adorable head. Ah! grant that love may induce me to embrace, in my turn, all that can render me more like unto Thee. Thou hast merited for me the grace to suffer. That grace is all-powerful: if it uphold my weakness, I shall have courage enough for any undertaking, and strength enough to execute it. Give me, then, that grace, O Lord. I will place my happiness and glory in trampling under foot my pride and self-love.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore Him as our divine King; thank Him for all He has been willing to suffer for us; and beg of Him to increase His holy love in our heart, to apply to us His merits, and to give us grace to imitate Him.

Resolution. To produce during the day some acts of humility or of interior mortification.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. I must suffer with Jesus if I wish to reign with Him.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TWENTY-FOURTH MEDITATION.

The Outrages offered to Jesus as King.

"They put a reed in His hand; and, bowing the knee before Him, they mocked Him, saying: Hail, King of the Jews!" (Matt. xxvii. 29).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 68.

2nd Prelude. O Jesus, divine King of all hearts, possess mine entirely, and give it a practical knowledge of Thy laws of humility, meekness, and love.

1st Point. With what dispositions of heart does Jesus receive these fresh outrages?

Behold, again, new sufferings and fresh outrages. It does not satisfy the savage soldiers of the pretorium to have inhumanly torn the body of our divine Lord by the cruel scourging, or to have pierced His sacred head with sharp thorns: their malice, the continuance of which is astounding, prolongs His sufferings yet more; adding to them scorn and insult, and refusing to Him that compassion which is some sort of solace to those who suffer. Such a constant succession of torments does

not, however, weary the patience of Jesus, because His love is strong as death; His eyes are ever fixed on the end of all His sufferings: the glory of His Father repaired, our salvation purchased,—the foresight of these strengthens, animates, and consoles Him, and renews unceasingly both His vigour and resolution. We have considered our Model: let us now cast a look on ourselves. Our trials never have equalled, nor ever can equal His; let us imitate His patience and meekness, and His unchanging constancy, by aiming with firmness and with love at the double purpose of all His sufferings and labours.

2nd Point. What are the mysteries contained in the royal dignity of Jesus?

Let us now endeavour to penetrate the mysteries which divine wisdom has enclosed in this sad circumstance of our Saviour's Passion. He receives the ensigns of royalty, the purple, the crown, and the sceptre; they salute Him as King, bending the knee before Him. He is really a King, but His royalty draws on Him in this world nothing but sufferings and humiliations. By this He would teach us that His subjects must likewise expect to suffer; that sin and the passions of men, which had usurped His lawful dominion, can only be vanquished and subjugated by the arms of suffering: in fine, that this miserable world is only a field of battle, not the region of peace, enjoyment, and repose. Again, other mysteries here offer themselves to our meditation: Jesus holds in His hand no other sceptre than a reed,—yet His sceptre is power itself; it will rule over the whole world, and will be exalted for all eternity, whilst the iron sceptres of the sovereigns of this world shall crumble to dust and be consigned to oblivion. Let us offer our loving homage to Jesus, our King; His goodness equals His power, and His power His love; He inspires all who approach Him with ardour, courage, and generosity to combat; with Him we cannot fail to conquer,—and victory ensures the crown.

Colloquy with our divine Saviour. Let us adore Him in this condition, so humiliating in the eyes of men, but so glorious in those of the Angels. Let us humble ourselves at being such cold, cowardly, timid subjects of a King so full of love, courage, and generosity. Let us beg Him to reanimate our languor, to fill us with His Spirit, to reign over our hearts, and to bring us to imitate Him through gratitude and love.

Resolution. To receive with resignation all the humiliations and contempt that divine Providence may send us, remembering that Jesus, our King and our Master, chose to be treated as the last of men and the outcast of the people.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. O Jesus, meek and humble of Heart, make my heart like unto Thine!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TWENTY-FIFTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is our King.

"They put a reed in His hand; and, bowing the knee before Him, they mocked Him, saying: Hail, King of the Jews!" (Matt. xxvii. 29).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 68.

2nd Prelude. O Jesus, divine King of all hearts, take full possession of mine, and give it a practical knowledge of Thy laws of humility, meekness, and love.

1st Point. Jesus is a King accessible to all who wish to engage themselves in His service.

It was with dispositions full of goodness and love that our divine Master permitted this sort of outrage

from the soldiers of the pretorium. Oh, how much that blood-stained purple, that crown of thorns, that sceptre of a reed, say to a feeling heart! they banish fear, inspire confidence, and inflame our love. The sinner finds in them the pledge of his hope, and the motive of his contrition; and the just man the height and depth of the love of Jesus. Our divine Master calls us all unto Him: Come, He says unto us, take My yoke upon you; it is sweet and light. Give Me thy heart; Mine has loved thee with an everlasting love.

2nd Point. Jesus is a King who dispenses with prodigality His most precious gifts on the day of His coronation.

"Come forth, ye daughters of Sion; come, and behold your King crowned with the diadem wherewith His Mother hath crowned Him on the day of His espousals and rejoicings" (Cant. iii. 11). It is on this day that the adorable King of all hearts contracts with the Church, His Spouse, an everlasting union; it is the day of His rejoicing, since it is the day of our salvation; it is the day of His accession to the throne—not as God, for in that quality His reign is eternal, as well as His priesthood—but as Man-God, as the Redeemer, Restorer, and Saviour of all men. What benefits are diffused throughout His vast empire on this auspicious day! Already, grace flows copiously from His wounds; yet a few hours more, and hell overthrown and the gates of heaven opened will render this great and victorious day for ever memorable. Let us, then, approach our divine King. He can and will grant everything to us to-day. Let us expose to Him all our wants; we need not fear to ask too much: a King like Jesus can refuse nothing to His subjects on the day of His accession to the throne.

Colloquy with Jesus, our divine King. Let us adore Him, and offer Him anew the homage of our entire dependence. Let us ask His pardon for our rebellion against His amiable laws; for our little love for His person; and for our want of confidence in His goodness;

and conclude by demanding of Him every necessary grace to repair the past, and employ well the future.

Resolution. To combat vigorously the defect which most opposes the perfect reign of Jesus within us.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Proceed prosperously and reign, O Jesus, for the sake of truth, meekness, and justice.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TWENTY-SIXTH CONTEMPLATION.

Jesus Clothed with the Purple Garment and the Crown of Thorns.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "Then the soldiers of the governor, taking Jesus into the hall, gathered together unto Him the whole band; and stripping Him, they put a scarlet cloak about Him. And plaiting a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand; and, bowing the knee before Him, they mocked Him, saying: Hail, King of the Jews! And spitting upon Him, they took the reed, and struck His head" (Matt. xxvii. 27-30).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself anew the hall of the Roman governor, where all the band of soldiers is assembled.

3rd Prelude. Grant me grace, O Jesus, to draw from this Meditation an intimate knowledge of Thy sufferings, of Thy love, and of Thy divine virtues.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: the Roman soldiers, filled with the rage both of Jew and of demon. Everything in them breathes cruelty and contempt for Jesus. Then consider Jesus Himself, that meek Lamb whose gentleness, patience, and humility are never moved: He submits to all; He is like a gentle prey in the claws of a

furious wild beast. O Jesus, where now is Thy strength! There are also many Jews present, come to be spectators of the barbarous scene, and who are as cruel as the soldiers. The Angels cover their faces with their wings; Jesus prevents them from exterminating His enemies.

2nd Point. Listen to the Words: the insults of the soldiers; their brutal language; the silence of Jesus; His interior communications with His Father: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34); the derisive homage of the murderers: "Hail, King of the Jews!" (Matt. xxvii. 29). O Jesus, Thou art my King, and the King of all hearts.

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: Jesus is inhumanly stripped of His clothes; His blood flows; they put upon His wounded shoulders an old purple cloak; the crown of thorns is placed upon His head; they force it on with violent blows; they sacrilegiously strike His sacred face; and spitting upon Him, they mock Him, and, out of derision, bow the knee before Him.

4th Point. Jesus endures all in silence; His love sustains the struggle of the combat.

5th Point. His divinity is veiled; His power, as it were, chained down. Even His beauty has disappeared; He is no longer to be recognised.

6th Point. Nevertheless, a heart touched with His love will know how to recognise His voice. What is the language which that sacred voice speaks to us? What does our divine Saviour demand of us as His recompense for so many sufferings and humiliations?

Colloquy with our divine Saviour. Let us adore Him in the depth of ignominy to which His love has induced Him to descend for us. Let us make Him reparation for so many torments and outrages which our sins have brought upon Him. Let us beg Him to enkindle within our soul the sacred flames with which His divine Heart is consumed, and to engrave His image so perfectly within our heart that we may imitate His virtues in every circumstance of our conduct.

Resolutions. I will make them according to my deficiency in humility or in the spirit of mortification, proposing to myself to practise either virtue in union with Jesus.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Hail, King of the Jews!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TWENTY-SEVENTH MEDITATION.

PILATE PRESENTS JESUS TO THE PEOPLE, SAYING: BEHOLD THE MAN!

"Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith to them: Behold, I bring Him forth unto you that you may know that I find no cause in Him. (Jesus therefore came forth, bearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment.) And Pilate saith to them: Behold the Man!" (John xix. 4-5).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself that part of Jerusalem where Pilate's palace is situated; behold anew the marble staircase at the entrance; it is from the top of this staircase that Jesus is shown to the people.

2nd Prelude. Divine Jesus, grant me grace to draw from this Meditation a lively gratitude to Thee, and a great zeal to imitate Thee through love.

1st Point. Jesus, the Man-God, is the Saviour of men; He makes satisfaction for their sins.

"Behold the Man!" (John xix. 5) said Pilate, presenting Jesus to the people. Let us meditate carefully on these words: "Behold the Man!" Behold Him who has become Man through compassion and love for men: behold Him and consider Him attentively. His body is torn with stripes; His head crowned with thorns;

His face bruised with blows and covered with spittle; the blood flows from His forehead; all His limbs tremble with weakness and pain; His loving Heart is saturated with reproaches; behold Him who has become Man for the salvation of men. The state to which we behold Him reduced makes us shudder, but His love for us has not deemed it to be too frightful; the greatness of our woes demanded severe remedies; and Jesus, a public Victim, has taken on Himself all our crimes to expiate them, all our maladies that we may be cured of them. His crown of thorns, His bruises, the affronts and mockeries with which He is overwhelmed, expiate our pride and its accompanying vices; His unheard-of pains, our sensuality and immortification (the poisonous sources of an infinite number of sins); the abandonment which He endures, and which His Sacred Heart feels most acutely, expiate all those dangerous or criminal affections which have withdrawn our hearts from God; the painful stripping off of His clothes which He has already suffered, and will have yet twice again to endure, expiates the contemptible passions of those whose heart is attached to the things of this world; in fact, there is no vice or crime produced by the corruption of human nature which does not add to the torments of this New Adam, who, in becoming like unto men, has made Himself responsible for us. Oh, what love, what gratitude, do we not owe Him for benefits so great, which have cost Him so dear!

2nd Point. Jesus, the Man-God, is the model of men; He enriches them with His graces.

"Behold the Man!" Behold our God made Man, to teach men the way of salvation! Behold Him whose love has induced Him to become Man, that He may walk the first in the narrow way, trace out the path, and attract others to follow Him in it! Behold the Man-God, the Saviour of fallen man, and at the same time the Model of man regenerated; behold the Prototype of the elect; behold Him whom all must of

necessity resemble if they would enter into the kingdom of Heaven! Behold the Man of holiness, the Man of sorrows, the Man possessed of every virtue, delivering Himself up to every combat, and always coming off victorious! Behold the Man strong and mighty, the Life and Strength of all men! His Sacred Heart is the source of grace, the burning furnace of pure love, the inexhaustible treasure of all sanctity, the abyss of mercy; for it is at once the Heart of a God and the Heart of a man. Behold the Saviour of men, the Model of men, the Friend of men, the Refuge of men, their Salvation, their Happiness, and their Glory! Who will not attach himself to Him by the strongest bands of love! Who will not desire to become like Him, to be identified with Him, to live in future for Him alone for time and in eternity!

Colloquy with our divine Saviour. Let us adore God made Man through love, and become for us a Man of sorrows, and the last of men. If as God, eternal and impassible, He deserves to be adored, what does He not merit in the state to which His love for us has reduced Him? Let us beg of Him to engrave in the depth of our heart in indelible characters all the sufferings we have caused Him, and all the virtues of which He has given us an example.

Resolution. To combat vigorously our predominant passion, through gratitude to Jesus, and with a view of imitating Him.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.
Spiritual Bouquet. "Behold the Man!"
Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.
Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TWENTY-EIGHTH CONTEMPLATION.

PILATE PROCLAIMS ANEW THE INNOCENCE OF JESUS.—
THE PEOPLE DEMAND HIS DEATH.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "Pilate, therefore, went forth again, and saith to them: Behold, I bring Him forth unto you, that you may know that I find no cause in Him. When the chief priests, therefore, and the servants had seen Him, they cried out, saying: Crucify Him, crucify Him! We have a law, and according to that law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God. When Pilate, therefore, had heard this saying, he feared the more; and entering into the hall again, he said to Jesus: Whence art Thou?" (John xix. 4, 6-9).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself Jerusalem, and the palace of the governor.

3rd Prelude. Grant, O divine Jesus, through Thy grace, that the more I meditate on Thy holy Passion, the more Thy love may be increased within me, together with a horror of sin and a contempt of myself.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: the chief priests and elders full of rage, awaiting the results of the first torment of Jesus; the people are also awaiting them. Pilate comes forward; he is troubled and uneasy,—urged on by interior remorse, held back by human fear. Jesus follows him, clothed in the purple garment, the crown of thorns on His head, the reed in His hand; His blood flows from all parts. How exhausted and suffering He looks! but, at the same time, how peaceful, how submissive! What unchangeable meekness!

2nd Point. Listen to the Words: the confused tumult of the crowd. Pilate is about to speak; there is silence. "Behold," he says, "I bring Him forth unto you, that you may know that I find no cause in Him" (John xix. 4). What an admission, after the treatment he had just permitted towards One whom he declares innocent! Jesus comes forth. "Behold the Man!" Pilate says. A

silence of astonishment and horror follows. An involuntary shuddering, some sentiments of compassion, are excited in a few of the spectators. In others, their rage redoubles; it becomes a wild fury which demons stir up and stimulate unceasingly. Loud cries are heard demanding the death of the sacred Victim: "Crucify Him, crucify Him! Take Him, you, and crucify Him, says Pilate, for I find no cause in Him. We have a law, and according to that law He ought to die, because He has made Himself the Son of God" (John xix. 6, 7). At these words the soul of Pilate, more than ever troubled, is seized with a mortal fear. And not without reason; for He whom he is about to condemn to death is indeed the Son of God. He leads Jesus back into the hall, and questions Him whence He is; but He answers not. "Knowest Thou not," asks Pilate, "that I have power to crucify Thee, and I have power to release Thee?" "Thou wouldst not have any power over Me," replies our divine Master, "unless it were given thee from on high" (John xix. 10, 11). Pilate goes forth again, more troubled now than ever before. The Jews cry out: "If thou release this Man, thou art not Cæsar's friend; for whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar" (John xix. 12). These words are effectual, the sentence of death is about to be pronounced.

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: Jesus obeys the soldiers, who order Him to go before the judgment-seat. Each step He takes re-opens His wounds, and causes the blood to flow; He staggers like a feeble man loaded with some heavy burden. He shows Himself to the people. Pilate leads Him about from one place to another; Jesus follows him like a meek lamb. During all the rest of the time He remains standing, holding the reed in His hand. He receives humbly all the insults, mockeries, and injuries offered to Him. He awaits in peace the unjust sentence about to be pronounced against Him.

4th Point. His pains are excessive; His humiliation has reached its summit; His strength is exhausted; His love, however, continues to grow stronger and more ardent.

5th Point. His divinity is veiled to the eyes of the wicked, and leaves them to act as they please.

6th Point. Can we refuse anything to Jesus, reduced for love of us to such a state of suffering?

Colloquy with our divine Lord. Let us adore Him and thank Him, and beg Him to fill our souls with His love, a horror of sin, and an ardent zeal to repay His infinite goodness, which has induced Him to suffer so much for us. Let us ask of Him the grace to abandon ourselves, after His example, into the hands of our heavenly Father, beholding His will alone in every trial, and receiving sufferings and humiliations lovingly whenever divine Providence may please to send any.

Resolution. To impose on myself some special practice of humiliation, mortification, or abandonment into the hands of God.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Behold me ready, O my God, to do Thy holy will.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TWENTY-NINTH CONTEMPLATION.

Jesus Condemned to Death.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "Now when Pilate had heard these words, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat. And it was the parasceve of the Pasch, about the sixth hour; and he saith to the Jews: Behold your King! But they cried out: Away with Him, away with Him! crucify Him! Pilate

saith to them: Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered: We have no king but Cæsar. Then, therefore, Pilate delivered Him to them to be crucified" (John xix 13-16).

2nd Prelude. Again let us figure to ourselves the hall of the pretorium, and behold the place where Pilate sat to condemn Jesus. It is a gallery built in the form of a bridge, and supported by arches.

3rd Prelude. O Jesus, increase more and more within my soul the love and gratitude which I owe to Thee. Deign, moreover, to inspire me with a holy zeal to die to myself, that so the fruits of Thy precious death may be applied to my soul.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: Pilate in the judgment-seat, surrounded by soldiers. Uneasiness and embarrassment are visible on his countenance. He casts his eyes sometimes on the furious mob, sometimes on the accusers of the Innocent, and then on Jesus Himself. The multitude make use of threatening gestures. The priests and Pharisees can hardly contain their impatience to shed the blood of their Saviour. Jesus is tranquil; He calmly awaits the decision of Pilate with His eyes cast down.

2nd Point. Listen to the Words: Pilate makes a sign that he is going to speak. There is a silence of expectation. "Behold your King!" he says, pointing to Jesus. Let us take those words to ourselves, and engrave them in the bottom of our heart. What reply are the people about to make? "Away with Him! away with Him! crucify Him! Shall I crucify your King?" cries the weak judge, in a last effort of expiring equity. "We have no king but Cæsar," the people reply (John xix. 15).

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: Pilate in the judgment-seat. A form of justice is maintained, in order to commit the most crying act of injustice. Jesus is silent; His enemies are furious while demanding His death. Pilate abandons their Victim to them, after having five times declared Him innocent.

4th Point. Let us consider with what joy and burning desire to give His life for us Jesus hears His last sentence pronounced; nothing that He has yet suffered has been able to satisfy His loving Heart; it is for the Cross He longs.

5th Point. The divinity of Jesus is veiled and conceals itself more and more; it allows His enemies to act; it deters the Angels from taking up His defence.

6th Point. It is the love of Jesus and our sins that dictated the sentence of death pronounced against Him. What ought we not in justice to do and suffer for a Saviour who has loved us so much?

Colloquy with our divine Saviour, condemned to death for us. Let us speak to Him all that love, gratitude, and compassion inspire. Let us beg Him not to permit His death to be without avail to us. Let us unite ourselves to Him in mind and heart, to follow Him to Calvary and see Him die, in order to die with Him to all that would hinder Him from living entirely in us.

Resolution. To renounce myself in that which will cost me the most, in order to unite myself to the sacrifice of Jesus.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "If any one will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me" (Luke xiv. 27).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTIETH CONTEMPLATION.

THE SAME SUBJECT.—APPLICATION OF THE SENSES.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "Jesus therefore came forth, bearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment; and Pilate saith to them: Behold the Man! When the chief priests, therefore, and the servants had seen Him, they cried out, saying: Crucify Him, crucify Him! He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God. When Pilate, therefore, had heard this saying, he feared the more, and he sought for a means to release Jesus; but the Jews cried out, saying: If thou release this Man, thou art not Cæsar's friend. Now when Pilate had heard these words, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat. And he delivered Him to the Jews to be crucified" (John xxix. 5-8, 12-16).

2nd Prelude, page 84.

3rd Prelude. Grant me grace, O divine Saviour, to draw from this contemplation a more lively horror for sin, a more ardent love for Thee, and greater fervour to imitate Thy example.

1st Point. Sight. What a spectacle presents itself to the sight! A clamorous multitude; a weak judge; the Saint of Saints condemned to death! If we enter into all the details, what a sight is before us! In the crowd we behold some of the wicked mob, more furious than others, who stir up the rest; the timid and cowardly let themselves be dragged on; the indifferent follow blindly the general opinion. Perhaps some of the friends of Jesus are present, some of the holy women, in deep affliction; perhaps,—and even most probably, His holy and desolate Mother is there, the sword of grief in her heart. In the judgment-seat is Pontius Pilate, who has just yielded to human respect, and burdened his soul with an awful crime. At his feet we see Jesus, palè, suffering, and disfigured; but calm, meek, patient, submissive, and full of love for man.

The eternal Father and all the Angels are attentive to what is taking place.

2nd Point. Hearing. Hearken to the tumult of the multitude; their cries of death: "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" the sentence pronounced by Pilate; the interior acquiescence of Jesus; the wail of the holy women, and the stifled sobs of Mary.

3rd Point. Smell. A perfume of myrrh and incense ascends from the Sacred Heart of Jesus; for that divine Heart, all on fire with love, achieves beforehand, in will and desire, the consummation of His bloody sacrifice. Another sacred heart is there, and sends forth also to Heaven a similar perfume: it is the heart of Mary. Her feelings unite themselves to those of Jesus. Oh, what a piercing and refreshing odour. Let us try to penetrate ourselves with it, that it may animate our courage and give us strength to follow Jesus to Calvary, there to die with Him upon the Cross.

4th Point. Taste. Let us taste, as it were, sip by sip, of the pungent bitterness of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary; the profound peace and perfect submission with which that bitterness is mingled; the ardour of Jesus for the consummation of His sacrifice. What a contrast to the infernal rage of the Jews!

5th Point. Touch. Two objects offer themselves to our veneration: Jesus suffering, and Mary desolate. Let us go first to our holy Mother, and beg of her to soften the hardness of our hearts by her tears. Afterwards we will approach the judgment-seat; Jesus stands before it; He is accessible to all; He does not forbid us to kiss with love and respect His sacred feet, or His divine hands bound fast, or the reed, the sceptre of our King. O my Saviour, how happy shall I be if I can soothe Thy sufferings and console Thy adorable Heart!

Colloquy with Jesus and Mary. Let us adore our God and Saviour at the moment He receives His death-

sentence. Let us prove our gratitude to Him for such great mercy and goodness. Let us thank Mary also for the consent she gave to the sacrifice which was to save us. Let us entreat both the Son and the Mother to unite us to all their sentiments, and above all, to teach us how to practise their virtues. Let us beg of them, most earnestly, the true spirit of sacrifice, and every necessary grace to put it faithfully in practice.

Resolutions. To unite myself in all my actions to the sacrifice of Jesus, through the interposition of the heart of Mary; and not to neglect any effort to sacrifice my inclinations and repugnances to the good pleasure of God.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Sacrifice and sin-offerings Thou wouldst not have; then said I: Behold I come to do Thy will, O my God" (Heb. x. 5-9).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTY-FIRST MEDITATION.

The same Subject.

"And they took off the purple robe from Him, and put His own garments on Him; and they led Him out to crucify Him" (Mark xv. 20).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Again represent to yourself the public enclosure, the judgment-seat, and, at a little distance from it, the place where the cross is already prepared; it is fifteen feet long, and eight broad.

2nd Prelude. Grant me grace, O Jesus, to enter with Thee the sacred road of Calvary, and to walk therein even to my last breath.

1st Point. The interior dispositions with which Jesus bears His Cross.

Jesus is divested of the purple robe with which He had been clothed out of derision; His own clothes are returned to Him; and, having put them on, He is conducted to the place where the Cross awaits Him, which they now put upon His shoulders. Behold the moment at length arrived which He has so long and so ardently desired, "that hour for which Jesus was come into the world". The path to Calvary displays itself to His view; in the distance He contemplates the place where He is to shed His blood and yield His last breath. This time Isaac loads Himself with the wood for His sacrifice, and, with sacred fire in His divine Heart, He traverses the path to the holy mountain. Ah! what sentiments now fill His soul! He begins to drink even to the dregs the bitterness of His chalice, and His thirst for sufferings increases in Him more and more; this thirst is unquenchable; it is caused by the devouring fire of His love. Divine mysteries are here accomplished of which no created intelligence can ever fathom the depths. Jesus suffers and He suffers without consolation. God, who proportions our trials to our weakness, does not treat His only Son with the like consideration; He overwhelms Him with an immense weight of wrath. It calls forth all the strength of Jesus not to sink under it; and that strength is the strength of a God. Ah! the insupportable weight of our sins was united to the Cross of our Saviour! How can I sufficiently detest them! how can I refuse to renounce for ever all that could increase that burden!

2nd Point. We ought to follow Jesus in the road to Calvary.

Justice, love, and gratitude call on us to follow in His sorrows, in our turn, our Victim, our Saviour, our Model, and the Spouse of our souls: His loving Heart attracts us. To whom besides Him shall we go? In Him are the treasures of eternal life. The way is marked with His blood. With this divine blood all graces have flowed forth,—powerful graces, which wash out every stain, destroy every vice, and produce every virtue; but

graces proper to the road of Calvary, and which cannot be found elsewhere. Oh, how salutary, how good it must then be to fix ourselves in this holy path, in such a manner that we may never depart therefrom! It is the road of death and of life,—of death to sin and ourselves, and of life in Jesus. It is the royal road, the sure way, the narrow path which we must seek unceasingly, since he who finds it finds a treasure of priceless worth. Are we penetrated thoroughly with these principles?—above all, do we act from them?

Colloquy with our divine Saviour. Let us thank Him for having marked out for us the royal Way of the Cross at the price of so much suffering. Let us humble ourselves for the want of zeal we have shown up to the present in following in it. Let us ask for the true spirit of Christianity, to esteem and desire as we should the graces of Calvary, to labour earnestly to render ourselves worthy of them, to receive them with gratitude, and to co-operate with them faithfully.

Resolutions. To unite all my troubles and miseries to the Cross of Jesus, thanking God for them, and exciting myself from time to time to love them in the light of faith, regarding them as particles of the true Cross.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "If any one will be My disciple, let him take up his cross and follow Me."

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTY-SECOND CONTEMPLATION.

Our Lord Carrying His Cross.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "They stripped Him of the purple robe, gave Him back His own clothes, and led Him forth to crucify Him.

Jesus, therefore, bearing His own Cross, went forth to the place called Calvary, which is in Hebrew Golgotha" (Mark xv. 20; John xix. 17).

2nd Prelude. Let us represent to ourselves the streets of Jerusalem, and, outside the town, the road to Calvary; it is rugged and uneven, covered with thorns and briers.

3rd Prelude. Draw me to Thy footprints, O Jesus, that I may follow Thee through love along that painful road which Thou didst tread for love of me.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: a furious band of soldiers; the chief priests, who have not blushed to join the crowd, and follow the divine Victim to the place of execution, there to satisfy their ferocious delight with His torments; the executioners and soldiers, who resemble wild beasts more than men: all these surround the Son of God. Two thieves, taken from their dungeon to undergo their final punishment, walk by His side. And Jesus, our divine Master, drags Himself along; He has no strength, and the enormous weight of the Cross overwhelms Him. Mary, His holy Mother, is there in the crowd. Her grief is great as the ocean. God the Father is attentive. The Angels are filled with love, compassion, admiration, and respect.

2nd Point. Listen to the Words: insults, yells, and blasphemies resound on all sides; hell itself inspires this furious multitude. Jesus is silent. That mouth, so eloquent, which has so often ravished its listeners with admiration, is now closed. That powerful voice, which but lately called forth the dead from the tomb, is no longer heard. But the Sacred Heart of Jesus: what does that say? "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy name. Behold, I come" (John xvii. 1, 13).

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: Jesus advances slowly and painfully; each effort causes His divine blood to flow anew. He is treated with the greatest inhumanity. He meekly follows those who are leading Him to death. Soon His strength is exhausted, and He falls under the weight of the Cross. He rises again,

goes on again, and falls again. They overwhelm Him with blows, and have less compassion for Him than for a beast of burden. And in the midst of this disgraceful treatment He is without bitterness towards those who make Him suffer, and full of mercy towards us, who, by sinning, have condemned Him to death.

4th Point. There is still in the loving Heart of Jesus the same constancy in suffering, the same ardour for the Cross, the same love for me.

5th Point. His divinity is veiled; He abandons Himself to His cruel enemies.

6th Point. It is for us He suffers and is about to die; is it not just that we should live for Him alone?

Colloquy with Jesus suffering. Let us thank Him for having loved us so much, and humble ourselves for loving Him so little; and also for not being able to discharge, for His love, the most easy and indispensable duties, while for love of us He embraces willingly all sorts of sufferings. Let us beg of Him to change our heart, to fill it with His love, and to draw it after Him in the path of generosity and of every virtue.

Resolutions, page 90.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "If any one will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Mark viii. 34).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTY-THIRD MEDITATION.

We ought to esteem and embrace the Cross.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself the road to Calvary; it is rugged and hilly.

2nd Prelude. Divine Jesus, cause the light of truth to shine before my eyes, that it may guide me to the holy mountain, and there discover to me the value of the Cross and of sufferings.

1st Point. We do not sufficiently know the value of crosses.

Too often we behold in sufferings only a cause for sadness, and real misfortunes; this is because we are too much accustomed to judge of things according to human views. Oh, how different would our thoughts be if we were to call to our aid the pure light of faith! We should then see that those misfortunes which we dread are afflicting alone to nature, but that grace and the spirit find in them their nourishment and their life; we should come to understand that the Cross purifies us from our imperfections, satisfies the justice of God for our sins, enriches us with abundant merits, unites us to Jesus in this life, and prepares us to be united with Him eternally in Heaven. O my dear Saviour, what inestimable advantages are these! How can the pain attached to suffering be compared to the happiness of growing in Thy love, and of becoming united to Thee in intimate union! Jesus, the Treasure of faithful hearts, sovereign Good of those souls to whom Thou hast given to experience how sweet Thou art! ought I to dread those passing sufferings which the unction of Thy grace sweetens, when I know that by accepting them willingly I become more closely united to Thee by bonds so sacred? Ah, do not permit this. Uphold my weakness. I accept, from my heart, at this moment all the crosses it shall please Thee to impose upon me. I receive them from Thy hand as a pledge of Thy love, and I desire to carry them to the latest moment of my life.

2nd Point. We do not love crosses in a sufficiently practical manner, because we do not look upon them in their true light.

Our divine Saviour, whose goodness is infinite, allots to each of us the crosses which ought to sanctify us; He

selects them in accordance with our wants, proportions them to our strength, and never imposes them on us without giving us at the same time the grace necessary to bear them well. He afflicts some by corporal sufferings; others by the loss of their goods or their friends; others, again, by interior trials, or by a succession of trifling contradictions, often more difficult to bear than great troubles. His designs over all are full of love; He wishes to make all participate in the merits of His sacrifice. O Jesus, never permit me to ignore Thy divine hand, when it shall deign to weigh heavily upon me. O my Lord, Thou hast two ways of visiting us: by joy, and by affliction. The first tends to soften the pains of our exile, and to lighten our labours; but the second is far more precious: it advances us towards our end; and, if it were possible for such weak creatures as we are to suffer always without consolation, we ought to desire it. O my Saviour, is this disposition to be found in my soul? Thou knowest. Yet, however great my misery may be, I place myself in Thy divine hands. Give me, as Thou seest best, consolation or the cross; I accept all, and abandon myself to Thy good pleasure. All I ask of Thee is, Thy grace and Thy love; if Thou givest me these, I shall be rich enough, and I desire nothing more.

Colloquy with Jesus suffering. Let us offer Him the homage of adoration and love. Let us ask of Him the grace to esteem and love crosses; to accept all those He has already sent us, uniting them to His.

Resolution. To suffer willingly, in union with Jesus, whatever troubles I may have to bear to-day.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. O Jesus, give me grace to esteem and love the cross.

Prayer. Receive, O Lord, &c., page 31.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTY-FOURTH MEDITATION.

Jesus meets His most holy Mother.

The Holy Scriptures, without speaking expressly of this meeting, give us sufficiently to understand that it took place, since we find from them that Jesus was alone at the time of His condemnation, and Mary was standing at the foot of the Cross after He was fastened to it. A tradition generally received mentions that this heartrending scene took place in the street which commences the sad route to Calvary.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself this street, where the crowd becomes dense, and where Mary, repulsed by the soldiers, meets her divine Son.

2nd Prelude. O Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, grant me grace to share Thy grief, and become inflamed with Thy love.

1st Point. How agonising this meeting must have been to Jesus and Mary.

Consider what heartrending affliction the tender and sensitive Heart of Jesus must have experienced when He saw His most holy Mother join the crowd, and follow His steps to the place of execution. The extreme grief of this afflicted Mother, far from bringing any relief to His sufferings, only served to aggravate them. Mary suffered to see Jesus suffer, and Jesus suffered to behold Mary's agony; and thus, by a communication of grief and love, these two Sacred Hearts, so closely united together, endured beforehand all the tortures of the crucifixion. O incomprehensible suffering, of which the most afflicted hearts can scarcely form the smallest conception! Every noble, sensitive, and generous sentiment in the Hearts of the Son and of the Mother co-operated at this moment to inflict on them the most cruel martyrdom. Shall I remain insensible to their

pains? These sorrowful mysteries are accomplished for me; shall I refuse my love to a Saviour and a Mother who have sacrificed for me their dearest affections?

2nd Point. The example of Mary teaches us how we ought to follow after Jesus.

Called upon by our vocation to Christianity to follow Jesus to Calvary, let us learn of Mary how we ought to go there. This ever-blessed Mother goes there with love, courage, and submission to the will of God; she unites herself to the sacrifice of her adorable Son, sharing all the dispositions and sentiments of His Sacred Heart. It is thus I ought to walk in the footsteps of my divine Master. God does not forbid me to feel the painfulness of sacrifices; to have my heart pierced when He afflicts me with His just severity: but what He demands of me is, that my will be ever submissive to His, and that, notwithstanding the repugnance of nature, I always remain faithful to Him. O Mary, my most venerated Mother, obtain for me a firmness like thy own, together with a courage that no trial may be able to shake. But, above all, obtain for me an ardent love for Jesus, and the grace to unite all my sorrows and afflictions to His bitter Passion.

Colloquy with Jesus and Mary. Let us ask of them hatred of sin, their holy love, and grace to imitate them and unite ourselves to their sufferings, &c.

Resolution. To support willingly, in union with Jesus and Mary, all the occasions of trial and suffering that may befall me.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Attend and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow" (Lament. i. 12). *Or*, Heart of Mary, pierced with a sword of sorrow, pray for us.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTY-FIFTH MEDITATION.

SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS TO CARRY HIS CROSS.

"And as they led Him away, they laid hold of one Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country: and they laid the Cross on him to carry after Jesus" (Luke xxiii. 26).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself anew the road to Calvary; the path which Jesus has already trodden is marked with a track of His blood.

2nd Prelude. O my Saviour, grant me the grace that I may embrace for love of Thee all the crosses it shall please Thee to send me, and that I may unite them to Thine.

1st Point. What was the intention of the Jews in obliging Simon of Cyrene to carry the Cross?

It was not from any feeling of compassion that the murderers of Jesus relieved Him of His Cross; the sight of this divine Lamb, covered with wounds, overwhelmed with sorrow, and exhausted with the loss of His blood and strength, made no impression on hearts harder than iron; but as their rage was not yet satisfied with the ignominies and torments they had made Him endure, as they wished to brand His memory for ever with the infamous punishment of the Cross, they feared to see Him expire before the complete accomplishment of their crime; and this it was which induced them to take from His wounded shoulders the enormous weight of the Cross. Jesus knew their motive; but, ever submissive, humble, obedient, and full of meekness, He let Himself be relieved of the wood for His sacrifice in the same way as He had taken it upon Him; ready to burden Himself with it anew upon the first order given, should He be required to do so. O Sacred Heart of my Jesus, how comes it that Thou wert not moved with indignation at the sight of such barbarity and of so malicious an aggregation of cruelties, of which Thou wert

the object? Ah! in the last sentence all is explained; it is against Thee that they are enraged: against Thee, the adorable Victim, who willest to expiate our crimes; against Thee, our good Shepherd, who willest to lay down Thy life for Thy sheep: and in this unjust and merciless treatment alone Thou beholdest the means of consummating Thy painful sacrifice! O Love! O Goodness! never permit my heart, O Jesus, to be so unworthy of Thine as to reject the humiliations and sufferings which are intended to enable it to share in Thy torments, and apply to itself their merits!

2nd Point. With what intention did Jesus permit Simon to aid Him in carrying His Cross?

Jesus, the Victim of obedience, let Himself be led forth to death, and permitted sorrow to crush Him with all its weight; but He was not less the all-powerful God, whose sovereign will presides over every event; it was His adorable providence which permitted this circumstance of His Passion, as it had permitted all the others, to teach us important lessons, and to manifest to us His Sacred Heart. That privileged man, who had the happiness to aid Christ in carrying His Cross and to relieve Him of some of its weight, represents the generous souls who have the courage to follow Jesus to the holy mountain; He would by this means instruct those thus united to Him by His grace and love, that, when sufferings and trials weigh them down, the Cross they bear is not a fruitless one, but the Cross of their divine Master: that they carry it with Him; that their adorable Saviour is by their side. He would remind them that they lessen by their constancy and fidelity the bitterness of His chalice, and, by an exchange worthy of the generosity of His Sacred Heart, He recompenses their courage with all the treasures of graces which He has merited for them on Calvary. Oh, how precious then is suffering, when we view it with the eyes of faith! Would that I had always remembered that the trials and afflictions of this life were a real participation

in the Cross of Jesus, that they united me to Him, and applied to me His merits. O my divine Saviour, grant me grace henceforth to sanctify all my sufferings by resignation, patience, and love.

Colloquy with Jesus carrying His Cross. Let us adore Him, thank Him, and testify gratitude and love for Him. Let us ask of Him the grace to sympathise with Him in His sorrows, to unite our griefs to His, to follow Him in the road to Calvary, and never more to be separated from Him.

Resolution. To unite to the sufferings of Jesus whatever I may have of painful to endure.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest" (Luke ix. 57).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTY-SIXTH MEDITATION.

A pious Woman wipes the Face of Jesus.

Tradition has transmitted the knowledge of this fact to us, which is not mentioned in the Scriptures.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent Mount Calvary to yourself, just before reaching the judgment-gate through which the criminals had to pass.

2nd Prelude. O my Saviour, grant me grace to imitate the love of the favoured Veronica; and deign to engrave Thy divine image in my heart as Thou didst imprint it on her veil.

1st Point. Veronica gives Jesus a striking proof of her faith and love.

Jesus, bearing His Cross, was on the point of arriving at the judgment-gate through which criminals were accustomed to pass on their way to the place of execution, when a holy woman since named Veronica saw Him from the casement of her window. The sight of this divine Saviour, covered with blood, perspiration, and dust, and crowned with thorns, pierced her to the heart: a ray of lively faith penetrating her at the same moment with respect and love for Jesus thus loaded with ignominy, she leaves her house, breaks through the crowd, falls on her knees before her Lord and Master, and wipes His sacred face so disfigured. O Jesus, how truly is the example of this holy woman fitted to fill me with confusion! How justly does her love condemn my coldness, her courage make me blush at my cowardice, and the liveliness of her faith cover me with shame at the sight of the weakness and barrenness of my own! Ah, Lord, is it right that Thou shouldst find my heart so cold and ungrateful, after Thou hast lavished Thy benefits on me with such tenderness? Forgive me, O Sacred Heart of my Jesus; I will try to repair the past, and make reparation for the outrages offered Thee by sinners, by loving Thee now, both for the time I have not loved Thee, and for the unhappy beings who refuse to love Thee.

2nd Point. Jesus rewards the faith and love of Veronica.

Jesus, who would not leave the faith and zeal of Veronica without recompense, imprinted His adorable features on the veil with which she had wiped His sacred face. What was the consolation of this holy woman on seeing herself in possession of so precious a treasure! With what respect and love did she not take to her home that Sacred Image! with what care did she not preserve it! with what joy did she not show it to the Apostles and disciples after the resurrection of Jesus Christ! If, like her, we were generous enough to brave the fear of men, and surmount every

obstacle to procure the glory of Jesus and to make reparation for the outrages which He receives from sinners, this ever-blessed Master would imprint His likeness, not on a lifeless piece of linen, but on our heart, which He would unite to His in the most intimate manner. O precious and divine union! O holy and most desirable portraiture! O my Jesus, in the book of the sacred Canticles Thou hast said: "Place Me as a seal upon thy heart" (Cant. viii. 6); in my turn I beg of Thee to work within me the mystery of grace which these words signify. Imprint, O Lord, Thy image in a heart which belongs to Thee, but which cannot receive it unless it be like softened wax: therefore make it pliable with the flames of Thy divine love, and render it capable of receiving any form Thy divine hand may please to give it.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore Him with the most profound respect in the state to which He is reduced for love of me. Let us make Him all the reparation in our power for the outrages He received in His Passion, and for those He still receives every day from impious and bad Christians. Let us implore Him to imprint within us His divine resemblance, by making us imitate all His virtues.

Resolutions. To offer all my prayers and actions to Jesus in a spirit of reparation, and to endeavour to animate them with a lively faith and an ardent love.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Imprint, O Jesus, Thy divine resemblance in my soul.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTY-SEVENTH MEDITATION.

JESUS CONSOLES THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM, WHO FOLLOW HIM.

"And there followed Him a great multitude of people, and of women who bewailed and lamented Him. But Jesus, turning to them, said: Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children" (Luke xxiii. 27, 28).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 99.

2nd Prelude. Adorable Jesus, discover to me what were the dispositions of Thy divine Heart when Thou didst console the daughters of Jerusalem.

1st Point. Jesus is more touched with the evils that the Jewish nation is about to bring down on itself than with His own sufferings.

"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children" (Luke xxiii. 28). There are moments of agony which break down the strongest courage; acute sufferings succeeding each other without interruption shake the most intrepid. The want is then felt by the sufferer of some one to compassionate his woes; the excess of suffering at such times seems in a certain manner to absorb the soul, so that it is difficult for the sorrows of another to affect it. Oh, how greatly was the soul of Jesus Christ elevated above such weakness! How different is His noble Heart from that of the rest of men! Weighed down by suffering, and scarcely able to sustain Himself, He beholds the women of Jerusalem weeping over Him; and recalling to His memory at this moment the terrible prediction which He had made concerning their unhappy nation, He is moved with compassion on foreseeing the evils which their Deicide would draw down upon them. "Daughters of Jerusalem," He said to them, "weep not over Me;" My sufferings would be sweet to Me, if only the merits of My death were to be applied to those who

are about to shed My blood; but they will reap no profit from it, for they will not do penance. Ah, weep for them, weep for your country and for your children, who will be witnesses of the desolation and woes about to fall on Jerusalem! O Sacred Heart of my Jesus! O immense love! infinite goodness! can there be any reason for setting any bounds to my confidence when I pray Thee to have mercy on sinners, or when I ask for myself the necessary graces for my salvation!

2nd Point. Jesus prefers the tears of repentance to those of a sterile compassion.

"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." The Heart of Jesus is touched with the tears shed over His sufferings, and He rewards them with an abundance of grace; but He wishes that these tears should produce lasting fruits of penance and conversion; He desires that the soul, sufficiently moved at His love to be afflicted at His sufferings, should also be generous enough to break the chains of sin, and return to Him with a sincere heart. O my Jesus, I here recognise Thy adorable Heart; it is our gain, our salvation, our happiness, that Thou desirest, before all and above all; our compassion will only be agreeable to Thee in so far as it applies to us the merits of Thy sufferings: Thou only wishest to see us unite our tears to Thy blood, in order that Thou mayest be able to make of both a precious balm wherewith to cure the wounds of our souls. O Sacred Heart of my Jesus! Heart of my Father and Saviour! Loving Heart of the most tender Benefactor and most generous Redeemer that ever has existed or ever will exist! how can I refrain from detesting with all my heart those sins over which Thou commandest me to weep? above all, how can I ever commit them again? Ah, I renounce them for ever! rather will I die than again offend Thee, O God of goodness and love!

Colloquy with Jesus suffering. Let us implore of Him true conversion of heart, a penitent love, and

compassion for His sufferings. Let us also address ourselves to Mary and to the holy women, begging them to obtain for us these great graces.

Resolutions. To produce frequent acts of contrition. To avoid carefully the smallest faults.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Heart of Jesus, Abyss of mercy, I adore and love Thee with all my heart!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTY-EIGHTH MEDITATION.

JESUS REACHES THE SUMMIT OF MOUNT CALVARY.—THEY PRESENT HIM WINE MINGLED WITH GALL.

"And they came to the place that is called Golgotha, which is the place of Calvary. And they gave Him wine to drink mingled with gall. And when He had tasted, He would not drink" (Matt. xxvii. 33, 34).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself the top of Mount Calvary; and there behold the fatal spot dug out to receive the foot of the Cross.

2nd Prelude. O Jesus, Victim of Love! permit me to accompany Thee in Thy sacrifice, and communicate to my heart the sentiments that animate Thine.

1st Point. Jesus reaches the top of Mount Calvary.

Arrived at the summit of the mountain of His sacrifice, Jesus casts a glance on the objects around: the cross, the nails, the executioners—all are ready. He also sees the place ready dug to receive the cross. The frightful apparatus of His execution causes Him no terror, yet His adorable Heart is cruelly oppressed; a thought more grievous than death has taken possession of it; He foresees the inutility of His blood for a prodigious number

of souls who will not profit by His redemption ; He sees through the course of ages, whose secrets His divine foreknowledge penetrates, these souls, dearer to Him a thousand times than His own life, falling in crowds into the eternal abyss, as the leaves are carried away by the autumn wind. At this sight His strength fails Him, He falls prostrate on the ground, and suffers the most inconceivable of martyrdoms. O my Saviour, why cannot I become consumed with zeal for the salvation of souls, on beholding to what an extent Thou dost love them ! Communicate to my heart, O my Sovereign Good, the zeal with which Thine is consumed, and give me a holy industry to employ every means, and a great courage not to be repelled by anything, when there is question of snatching a soul from hell.

2nd Point. They present wine to Jesus, mingled with gall.

"And they give Him wine to drink mingled with gall. And when He had tasted, He would not drink" (Matt. xxvii. 34). Here, again, are new mysteries, new lessons, new proofs of an infinite love. Jesus receives the bitter draught which is presented to Him ; He puts it to His lips, to expiate our intemperance and sensuality at our meals ; He tastes it, to show that He has experienced the bitterness of our sins, since He has borne their weight ; but He drinks it not, to give us to understand that their poison has never penetrated His holy soul, for ever incapable of contracting the slightest stain. He tastes it because He wills to suffer, but He drinks not, lest the beverage should assuage the acuteness of His torments, and because He desires to endure them all to the end without the smallest solace. O my Jesus ! when I behold in Thee so much love and generosity, I am covered with confusion on finding myself so ungrateful, so cold, so slow in testifying my love for Thee, and in embracing labours and sufferings for Thy sake. Change my heart, O Lord ! I have no hope but in Thee ; wilt Thou refuse to hear me when Thou hast

loved me to such an excess as to die for me in the midst of such torments?

Colloquy with Jesus suffering. Let us beg of Him sentiments of love, compassion, contrition, gratitude, and zeal; let us speak to Him interiorly, and give ourselves entirely to Him.

Resolutions. To labour for the salvation of souls as far as I am able. To accept willingly any suffering our Lord may please to send me to-day.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Heart of Jesus, broken on account of my sins, have mercy upon me!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTY-NINTH CONTEMPLATION.

Jesus nailed to the Cross.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "They crucified Him, and with Him two others, one on each side, and Jesus in the midst" (John xix. 18).

2nd Prelude. O my Jesus! pour down on me that blood which Thou art about to shed in order to purify me from all my sins, and fill me with Thy holy love.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: Jesus: overwhelmed with sorrow, waiting with resignation the consummation of His sacrifice. The executioners: their hearts filled with rage, and fury in their looks. The chief priests, the scribes, and Pharisees: unable to contain their ferocious joy. A crowd of people: who have accompanied the soldiers, to feast their eyes on the awful scene. The holy women: weeping, and striking their breasts. Mary plunged in a sea of sorrow, and sharing all the sufferings of her divine Son. St. John is with her and partakes of her affliction.

2nd Point. Listen to the Words: the tumultuous outcries of the populace; the insults of the enemies of our Saviour; the sobs of Mary and of the holy women; and the secret language of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who offers Himself to His Father for us, and who sweetly says to us: "My child, give Me thy heart" (Prov. xxiii. 26) in exchange for the blood I am about to shed for thee.

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: Jesus is stripped of His garments. All the torments of His scourging are renewed at this moment. His crown of thorns is also roughly displaced; His blood flows from all parts; His sufferings are beyond conception. Nevertheless He advances with meekness towards the Cross, which is extended along the ground. He lies down, and stretches Himself upon it. He offers His divine hand to the executioner, who is about to pierce it. The latter, rudely seizing it, fixes in it an enormous nail. Then the blows of the hammer redouble—those fatal blows, which re-echo within the heart of Mary! O dreadful and agonising torment! O Jesus and Mary, what tortures You are enduring for my sake! Shall we have the courage to contemplate this awful scene to the end? Jesus, the adorable Jesus, whose meekness cannot give way any more than can His love, now presents the other hand. It is dragged to its place with violence, then pierced with a nail like the first. His divine feet are also nailed to the Cross. This latter is raised on high, after being horribly jolted, and then it is let fall with all its weight into the hole prepared to receive it on the rock. O Mary, how was it that thou didst not expire in that dreadful moment! Ah, our Lord prolonged thy life, in order to prolong thy martyrdom! Mother of sorrow and of love, thou also must drink to the dregs thy chalice of bitterness! Never permit me, O Mother of mercy, to refuse to suffer, since by my sins I have caused the torments of Jesus, as well as thy own inconceivable sufferings

4th Point. Who is it that suffers? It is the eternal Son of God; He who is happy and glorious by essence, and who at the very same moment is working miracles to relieve the sufferings of others. It is Jesus, the God of all virtues, my Saviour, and my Sovereign Good!

5th Point. What does He suffer? Inconceivable torments in His body, and a mortal sadness in His soul. His Father places upon Him an enormous weight of wrath. Not one single interior consolation comes to assuage His sufferings.

6th Point. For whom does He suffer? For me! to deliver me from hell; to merit for me the happiness of seeing and possessing Him eternally in Heaven. What ought I not to do and suffer for a God who has not hesitated to suffer so much for me!

Colloquy with Jesus on the Cross. Let us beg of Him to draw our heart to Him according to the promise He has made: "When I shall be lifted up from the earth I will draw all things to Myself" (John xii. 32). Let us ask Him for His holy love, a horror of sin, esteem for sufferings, the strength to embrace them, and to fasten ourselves with Him to the Cross.

Resolution. To suffer for the love of Jesus, and in union with Him, all the pains attached to the fulfilment of my duties.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Lord, draw me after Thee, as Thou hast promised.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FORTIETH MEDITATION.

Dereliction of Jesus on the Cross.

"They crucified Him; and with Him two thieves, one at His right hand, the other at His left" (John xix. 18; Mark xv. 27).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Again represent to yourself Mount Calvary, and our Lord upon the Cross.

2nd Prelude. O my adorable Saviour, I beg of Thee, by that fearful dereliction which Thou didst endure upon the Cross, to detach my heart from all that could hinder it from belonging entirely to Thee.

1st Point. Jesus on the Cross is abandoned by all.

When a man is about to die, those who have loved him during life, or who have received benefits from him, unite together in order to give him, on the brink of the grave, that last of consolations, the consciousness that they compassionate his sufferings and regret and weep over his loss. But a like consolation was not awarded to the tender Heart of Jesus. Let us cast our eyes on the Cross, the cruel bed on which He is soon to yield up His last sigh: it is surrounded by His enemies; the chief priests and ancients of the people, all those of highest repute, and who are respected as the oracles of the nation, rejoice at His ignominious fate; they make a diversion of the horrible scene of His sufferings and death. The multitude, who but a few days before had received Him in such triumph, now mock at His ignominious end; and *all*, even those whom He had overwhelmed with His benefits, and fed in a miraculous manner, have either abandoned Him or joined themselves with His persecutors. Where are the Apostles, who that very night had given Him such noble assurances? They have been cowardly enough to conceal themselves, for fear of risking their lives if they came forward to soothe the last moments and

receive the last words of their Pastor and Father. Only one from amongst them, John, is standing beside Mary; two or three holy women are also there. These are all the faithful friends remaining to Jesus. O loving Heart of my Saviour! could I imitate the ingratitude of those who abandoned Thee in those trying moments; could I ever belie or dissemble my feelings when Thy enemies let loose their fury against Thy holy religion or sacred Person? No, Lord, this shall never be; whatever it may cost me, I will brave the fear of man, and will be faithful to Thee, even at the expense of my life—if this should be necessary.

2nd Point. Jesus is abandoned by the Angels and by His heavenly Father.

In the grotto, during His agony, a heavenly messenger was sent to comfort Jesus; but now these blessed Spirits show themselves no more; they abandon the sacred Victim to all the rigour of His painful sacrifice; He must tread the wine-press alone; He must overthrow His enemies single-handed; no one comes forth to aid Him in that terrible combat in which He is to lose His blood and His life. Holy angels, why do you now seem indifferent to the sufferings of your King? Look upon His emaciated body, suspended with all its weight by four ghastly wounds, which are widening every moment. Look upon that sacred Head, pierced all round, with nothing to rest on save the hard wood of the Cross and the crown of thorns. Contemplate that divine Soul, plunged in the depths of desolation. His Father has abandoned Him; He puts upon Him all the weight of His inflexible justice. Ah, come at least and support Him; procure Him some relief. But no, Jesus will swallow all the bitterness of His chalice without the smallest alleviation: He desires that the excess of His sufferings should teach us the excess of His love; He wishes to force us to give Him our hearts. O my Jesus, receive mine whole and entire, and never give it up to me again.

Colloquy with our Lord upon the Cross. Let us beg Him to bathe us in His adorable blood, and confirm our hearts in His love. Let us ask of Him the strength to suffer for Him, and to be ever faithful to Him, in spite of the contradictions of the world, and of the numerous obstacles we may have to encounter.

Resolution. To perform all my actions for the love of Jesus; but, above all, when any occasion of suffering presents itself, to seize it with eagerness.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Jesus hath loved me, and delivered Himself up for me" (Gal. ii. 20) to torments and to death.

Prayer Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FORTY-FIRST CONTEMPLATION.

JESUS NAILED TO THE CROSS.—APPLICATION OF THE SENSES.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

Preludes, page 109.

1st Point. Sight. Consider anew Mount Calvary—the Cross—Jesus hanging upon it. Behold how this divine Master has His sacred feet fastened, that He may wait for us; His arms extended to receive us; and His head bowed down to listen to all our prayers. Look also upon Mary. O Mother of sorrows, what a martyrdom is thine! The beloved Apostle, the holy women, shed bitter tears. Let us beg them to obtain for us also the grace to weep over the death of our adorable Saviour.

2nd Point. Hearing. Listen to the horrible blasphemies uttered against Jesus Christ. Hearken to the words of peace and mercy spoken by this divine Saviour: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do".

Then listen to the sobs of the holy women assembled at the foot of the Cross.

3rd Point. Smell. Let us inhale the odour of this sacrifice, alone worthy of the majesty of a God ; it mounts up to Heaven itself : never has a like perfume been exhaled from the earth. The Spouse in the sacred Canticles has said, "I will go to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense" (Cant. iv. 6). Behold the thrice-holy mountain, that mysterious hill ! Ah ! let us penetrate our souls with the balmy and invigorating odours it sends forth ; may they ever preserve us from the poisonous and contagious atmosphere of the world !

4th Point. Taste. Let us taste of the profound bitterness which penetrates the soul of Mary. Let us beg the Mother of sorrows, of mercy, and of love, to introduce us into the divine Heart of Jesus itself. What extreme desolation, what cruel abandonment, what searchless grief this adorable Heart endures ! Jesus drinks the chalice to the very dregs. Alas ! our sins prepared it for Him, and it is His love which makes Him empty it.

5th Point. Touch. Let us kiss the divine Cross to which our Saviour is fastened ; it is covered with His blood, that divine blood flows down even to the earth. O blood of my Jesus ! Let us gather it up with respect ; or rather, we will let it flow over us : it is a salutary bath to wash away all our stains, a divine dew which causes all virtues to bud forth.

Colloquy with Jesus crucified and Mary sorrowing. Let us ask them with entire confidence for all the graces that we need, and particularly for a horror of sin and love for Jesus.

Resolutions. To fly from sin with dread. To multiply acts of the love of God.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "I will ascend to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense" (Cant. iv. 6).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.
Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FORTY-SECOND MEDITATION.

First Word of our Lord upon the Cross.

"And Jesus said: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself Mount Calvary; then the Cross, with our Lord suspended from it.

2nd Prelude. O my divine Saviour, grant me grace to imitate the meekness and mercy of Thy divine Heart.

1st Point. The mercy of Jesus ought to excite our confidence.

Jesus has scarcely been lifted up between Heaven and earth, when His adorable Heart, eager to grant mercy to mankind, dictates to Him a prayer worthy of the great excess of His goodness. He sees His cruel enemies assembled at the foot of the Cross in order to heap upon Him still further their blasphemies and outrages; and, far from calling down the vengeance of Heaven on their heads, He utters those words which will for ever condemn all revenge or animosity: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34). What! my divine Saviour, shall a crime so enormous remain unpunished? Does not Thy glory call for a signal reparation? Art Thou forgetting its interests? Art Thou forgetting Thy justice? Yes, Jesus forgets all to remember His infinite mercy alone. Fastened to the Cross, He exercises the office of peacemaker between Heaven and earth: how could His Sacred Heart, at so solemn a moment, be occupied with any other feeling than that of clemency? How could it send forth other

words than those of pardon? O my Jesus, the moment is too favourable for me not to put it to profit with eagerness. Behold me at the foot of Thy Cross, guilty of a multitude of sins, but full of confidence in Thy infinite mercy. Grant me to experience its effects; wash my soul in the precious blood which flows from Thy wounds and restore to it all the claims on Thy Sacred Heart which its numberless offences have forfeited.

2nd Point. We ought to imitate the mercy of Jesus. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Our divine Master wishes that, in meditating on the different circumstances of His life and Passion, we should, above all, apply ourselves to study the dispositions of His adorable Heart, in order to unite and conform ourselves to it. Will it be possible for us to-day to understand, and above all to imitate, His infinite mercy? Oh, the fathomless depths of the charity of my Saviour! they surpass all the intelligence of the heavenly spirits. Jesus, however, wishes His disciples should imitate His divine example: above all, He desires that they should be distinguished by the resemblance of their charity to His eternal love. He has said, "Do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you" (Matt. v. 44). Jesus, my God! I wish to obey Thee; but how can such a weak creature find within myself the heroic courage to imitate such sublime virtue? Ah! let me not fear; let me not doubt the aid of Jesus: why look upon my own weakness, since He Himself will be my strength? Our divine Head lives in each of His members; it is His spirit which animates them, His grace which upholds them. O my Saviour! I place all my hope in Thee, and I promise Thee all. I love my enemies, O my God; bless them, load them with Thy favours, and render them, in return for the evil they have done or wish to do me, Thy most abundant graces and most precious gifts.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore His infinite mercy; and beg Him to make us experience its effects and to grant us grace to imitate it as far as we are able.

Resolutions. Never to admit within us any sentiment of bitterness or revenge against any one whatsoever. To pray for the enemies of God and of the Church.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FORTY-THIRD MEDITATION.

The Inscription over the Cross.

"And Pilate wrote a title also: and he put it upon the Cross. And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews. This title therefore many of the Jews did read: because the place where Jesus was crucified, was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin" (John xix. 19, 20).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, as before, page 113.

2nd Prelude. Jesus, my divine King, grant me grace to be ever submissive to Thee, and to labour with all my power to gain souls for Thee.

1st Point. "Pilate wrote a title, and he put it upon the Cross. And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews" (John xix. 19).

Divine Providence, whose instrument, without knowing it, Pilate was, contrived this circumstance. Jesus, lifted upon the Cross in sight of all the people, was to be recognised for what He really was—the King of the holy nation. But as that nation was no longer to be confined to the children of Israel alone, as the amiable

yoke of our Saviour was about to be imposed on all the world, God willed that the inscription should be written in three different languages, making it easy to be read by all sorts of persons. Let us draw near to this divine King. The Cross is the theatre of His combat; soon it will be the trophy of His victory. Let us bless Him, who, by that sacred wood, has re-established His power and strengthened His reign, according to the prediction of the prophet king. It is for our happiness that He wishes to subject us to His laws; is it not just that we should be penetrated with the most lively gratitude towards Him, together with the most perfect love?

2nd Point. We ought to be worthy subjects of Jesus.

Jesus is our King; and He has established His empire by the Cross. We ought, then, to cherish the precious Cross, and place in it all our glory, despite the railleries of an impious and senseless world; we ought, then, to attach ourselves with love to that sacred instrument of our redemption, no matter what it may cost our inclinations or sensitiveness. Jesus desires to reign over us only, that He may load us with His benefits, deliver us from the tyranny of our enemies, and defend us from their attacks. We ought, then, by a just return of love and generosity, to devote ourselves to His cause, much more for the interests of His glory than for our own interests. Give me, O my divine King, these noble and just sentiments; render my heart worthy of Thee, O Lord; grant that I may love Thee with a pure love, and serve Thee with a constant fervour.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore Him as our divine King; thank Him for having purchased this title—the pledge of our hope—at so dear a rate; beg of Him the grace to unite ourselves closely to Him; and ask Him for zeal for His glory, the love of the Cross, and the resignation necessary to allow ourselves to be fastened to it according to the designs of His love.

Resolution. To place my glory in the Cross of Jesus,

seizing every opportunity that may offer to-day of suffering for His love, or of braving the mockeries of the world.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. O Jesus, my divine King, reign for ever over my heart.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FORTY-FOURTH MEDITATION.

The Soldiers divide amongst them the Garments of Jesus.

"The soldiers therefore, when they had crucified Him, took His garments (and they made four parts, to every soldier a part) and also His coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said then one to another: Let us not cut it, but let us cast lots for it whose it shall be" (John xix. 23, 24).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. As before, page 113.

2nd Prelude. Grant me grace, O my Jesus, in all things to practise a spirit of poverty and renunciation.

1st Point. The poverty in which Jesus dies teaches us to what an extent He has carried the spirit of detachment.

"The soldiers, when they had crucified Him, took His garments, and they made four parts" (John xix. 23). Our divine Saviour was born in poverty; His entire life was passed in privation and in the want of all things. He wished to die as He had lived, divested of everything, in order to show us the extent to which He loved poverty and despised the things of this world. Let us enter into His Sacred Heart, there to study His dispositions. It was not to external things alone that His detachment extended. Never did He appropriate to

Himself the gifts of nature and of grace of which He had received the plenitude. His holy humanity always gave back faithfully to His heavenly Father the entire glory of all gifts received, and used these talents for His service alone, to whom from the first instant of His birth He had consecrated all the powers and faculties of both soul and body. Do we imitate Him in this? Do we look upon all the gifts and spiritual advantages with which our Lord has favoured us as His property, and not our own? Do we use them with a view to accomplish His will and second His designs over us? Are we ready to see ourselves deprived of them without murmuring or complaint, if it should please God so to ordain? O my Jesus! make my heart like Thine; teach me to detach it from all things, that I may fix it on Thee alone.

2nd Point. We ought to imitate the disinterestedness of Jesus.

The spirit of disappropriation is perhaps, of all the points of the spiritual life, the one understood with the greatest difficulty, and the least practised. We wish to serve God, but for our own sake, and not for His: we seek for the sweetness of devotion; we appropriate to ourselves the good we do,—in a word, it is ourselves and our own glory that we seek in the service of God, instead of seeking the good pleasure and glory of our Sovereign Master; or, if His glory does enter into our motives, it holds only the second rank. We have received all from God, both in the order of nature and of grace, and we appropriate all to ourselves—our good qualities of mind and heart, our talents, our knowledge, our virtues; even of our personal advantages we are vain, as of some good belonging to ourselves. God, however, has given us nothing for ourselves—not even our existence—since He has made all things for Himself, as Holy Scripture says; and He demands that all be referred back to Him again. O my Jesus! of what injustice then am I not guilty when I refuse to recognise the sovereign dominion of Thy Father over

all that I am and all that I possess. Fill me, O Lord, with Thy Spirit, and grant me grace to imitate Thee by the practice of universal detachment, which may cause me to submit in all things to the arrangements and designs of Thy adorable providence.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us ask of Him the grace to overcome ourselves, and to detach ourselves from all things, that we may no longer live save to desire His glory and the accomplishment of His holy will.

Resolutions. To do all my actions for God alone, and not to refuse Him any sacrifice that He may require of me.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. O my God, I am all Thine. Teach me to do Thy holy will in all things.

Prayer. Receive, O Lord, &c., page 31.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FORTY-FIFTH MEDITATION.

BLASPHEMIES OF THE JEWS AND THE PATIENCE OF JESUS.

"And they that passed by, blasphemed Him, wagging their heads, and saying: Vah, Thou that destroyest the Temple of God, and in three days dost rebuild it: save Thy own self: if Thou be the Son of God come down from the Cross. In like manner also the chief priests with the scribes and ancients mocking, said: He saved others; Himself He cannot save: if He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe Him" (Matt. xxvii. 39-42).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 113.

2nd Prelude. Grant me grace, O my Saviour, to imitate the divine patience of which Thou hast given us so great an example on the Cross.

1st Point. Jesus endures with patience the injuries offered to Him.

There is a measure of suffering which appeases justice. A malefactor, when given up to the rigour of the law, inspires sentiments of pity only; but hatred is never satisfied; that of the enemies of Jesus only increases the more at the sight of the torments He endures. These merciless ruffians are not ashamed to insult Him anew at the moment when He is about to yield up His last sigh. The chief priests, forgetting their dignity and the respect they owe to themselves, join with the populace in uttering against the sacred Victim of their fury the most frightful blasphemies: "If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross," they exclaim, "and we will believe in Thee" (Mark xv. 30-32). Jesus, nevertheless, is silent. He shrouds His divinity more and more; He holds back the indignation of His Angels; He disarms that of His Father; He wills that His sacrifice should be consummated, and that our salvation should become the price of His death. What love! O my divine Master! can I refuse Thee my heart, after all Thou hast vouchsafed to suffer to save me from eternal death!

2nd Point. We ought to imitate the patience of Jesus.

Jesus loves to behold in our hearts sentiments of love and gratitude so justly due to Him; but that which pleases Him yet more is our zeal to imitate Him, and render our heart like His. Let us, then, enter into His adorable Heart; and let us beg of Him to trace within us His divine patience—that precious virtue which is one of the fruits of the Holy Ghost, and the practice of which diffuses so much sweetness in the soul. The patience of Jesus has for its source His perfect submission to the will of His Father, and His love for us. He receives the outrages offered Him as a part of the chastisement He was to undergo for us, and accepts them with entire resignation. If it be so painful to us to support the smallest injury, it is because we are not

sufficiently convinced of the necessity we are under of satisfying the divine justice, and because we do not love Jesus as we ought. Adorable Saviour! have mercy on me; I embrace with confidence the foot of that Cross from which Thou hast taught me such admirable lessons. Ah! grant that the abundant graces flowing from this tree of life may diffuse themselves over my soul, and may give me strength to practise those virtues which Thou teachest me.

Colloquy with Jesus on the Cross. Let us beg Him, through His infinite merits, to trace within us His own divine virtues, to fill us with His Spirit, to make us profit by His lessons, and to give us grace to love Him without measure.

Resolution. To support with meekness and patience everything that may tend to wound my self-love.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Divine Jesus, teach me to possess my soul in patience.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FORTY-SIXTH MEDITATION.

Second Word of Jesus on the Cross.

"And one of the thieves who were crucified with Jesus blasphemed Him, saying: If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us. But the other answering, rebuked him, saying: Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation? And we, indeed, justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man hath done no evil. And then he said to Jesus: Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom! And Jesus said to him: Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in paradise" (Luke xxiii. 39-43).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 113.

2nd Prelude. Divine Jesus, give me a true conversion of heart; and grant that I may repair, by ardent love, all the offences I have committed against Thee.

1st Point. With what fidelity the good thief corresponds to the grace of conversion.

Jesus raised upon the Cross offers His powerful grace to the two criminals associated with Him in His execution. The one resists the advances of His goodness, and blasphemes against Him; the other, more faithful, confesses himself guilty, avows the innocence of Jesus, recognises His divinity, implores His mercy, and obtains the assurance of being admitted even that very day into the abode of never-ending happiness. Oh, how powerful is the grace of Jesus! the man who but an instant before was a common robber, is now an apostle full of zeal for the glory of his Saviour; a fervent disciple, who esteems himself happy in being crucified with his divine Master; a perfect penitent, whose heart, purified in the flames of divine love, no longer preserves a trace of its former stains and deformity. How is it, then, that the same grace which can work such wonders leaves me always the same? Alas! it is because it finds within me too many obstacles to its divine operations; it is because I have not heartfelt regret for my faults, nor contempt for myself, nor confidence in Jesus. Divine Saviour, have pity on me; I have recourse to Thy goodness with entire confidence: heal my soul, change my heart, and work within it those prodigies of grace with which Thy love desires so ardently to favour it.

2nd Point. With what goodness Jesus pardons the penitent thief.

The divine heart of Jesus has but one desire; that of exercising mercy. In order to animate the hope of sinners, and to show them that they must never abandon themselves to despair, He willed to work upon the Cross one of the greatest miracles of His grace. Let us consider in effect how easily He grants the prayer of the penitent thief: the latter makes Him only a short request: "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom" (Luke xxiii. 42). And Jesus grants him the remission of all his sins, gives him an assurance of salvation, and

even exempts him from the pains of purgatory. "Amen I say to thee, this very day shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43). Happy penitent! to receive from the lips of Jesus Christ Himself this precious assurance! With what joy was not your heart then filled! And I may also experience this same joy, if, like you, I know how to have recourse to Jesus with love and confidence. O my Jesus, it would indeed be to know little of Thy adorable Heart, if I did not hope for myself the effects of that mercy whose secrets Thou discoverest to me to teach me to confide in it. Yes, my Saviour, I hope in Thee; have mercy on me, according to the extent of Thy love and goodness.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore His mercy and bless His goodness. Let us ask of Him the forgiveness of all our sins, the grace to sin no more, and an unbounded confidence in His powerful grace.

Resolution. To have recourse to Jesus with entire confidence every time I fall into any error.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Lord, be mindful of me in Thy mercy.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FORTY-SEVENTH CONTEMPLATION.

Third Word of Jesus on the Cross.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "When Jesus therefore had seen His Mother and the disciple standing, whom He loved, He saith to His Mother: Woman, behold thy son. After that, He saith to the disciple: Behold thy Mother. And from that hour the disciple took her to his own" (John xix. 26, 27).

2nd Prelude. Continue to represent to yourself Mount Calvary, our Lord upon the Cross, and Mary

standing at the foot of it, with St. John and the holy women.

3rd Prelude. Divine Jesus, inspire me with a lively gratitude for the gift which Thou hast bestowed on me by giving me Mary for my Mother; grant that I may always have for her the same sentiments with which she deigns to honour me.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: Jesus fastened to the Cross, enduring the most cruel torments; Mary standing at His feet plunged in a sea of sorrow; St. John also sharing interiorly in the sufferings of his divine Master; the holy women shedding floods of tears.

2nd and 3rd Points. Listen to the Words and consider the Actions: Jesus feels that He is about to expire; He fixes His dying eyes on Mary; His Heart is touched; He thinks of a support for her, and of a Mother for us. Mary, all attention to every movement, understands that He has something to say to her; He designates His beloved disciple with His eyes, and says: "Woman, behold thy son" (John xix. 26). O sorrowful heart of Mary, what grief is thine at this moment, when Jesus gives thee another son in exchange for Himself! O Mother of sorrow, what loss can equal the loss of a Son like Jesus! Ah! what heart is there that could be incapable of sharing thy grief, and uniting its tears to thine? But let us listen again; Jesus addresses His disciple: "Behold thy Mother!" He says (John xix. 27). These words are addressed to me and to every Christian. St. John represented us all. O my Saviour, how great is Thy love! Thou hast given me Thy Father, teaching me to say: "Our Father, who art in Heaven"; Thou hast given me Thy Body and Thy Blood, by the institution of the Blessed Sacrament; Thou art about to give me Thy life; and still Thy divine Heart is not yet satisfied. No, the love of Jesus knows no bounds; He never says: "It is enough". His beloved Mother is the only treasure left to Him; He gives her also to us, and transmits to us all

His rights to the love of that incomparable Mother! Mary, attentive to the wishes of her divine Son, unites herself to His holy will; she receives us as her children, and engages herself to fulfil to its utmost extent the title of Mother, which she has accepted in our regard. O Mary, how many times have I not experienced the effects of thy solicitude and kindness! How often hast thou not laden me with most precious favours, notwithstanding my continued ingratitude and repeated infidelities! Ah! it has not been in vain that Jesus when dying begged thee to become my Mother! But alas! I have not rendered myself worthy of the sweet title of thy child; I have often afflicted thy maternal heart by offending Jesus, my Saviour and my God. Forgive me, O Mother of mercy, and bless the sincere resolution I form at this moment to fly with horror from the smallest faults, and to imitate the beautiful virtues of which thou hast set me the example.

Colloquy with Jesus suffering and Mary sorrowing. Let us thank our divine Saviour for the precious gift He has bestowed on us, and beg Him to make us worthy children of such a Mother as Mary is. Let us consecrate ourselves to this holy Virgin, giving up our hearts to her, that she may render them like the Heart of her Son.

Resolutions. To think often of Jesus and Mary during the day. To do all my actions in their presence, and in the manner I believe to be most pleasing to them.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. O Mary, show thyself my Mother, and grant that I may really be thy child.

Prayer. We have recourse to thy aid, holy Mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us at all times from all dangers, O ever-glorious and blessed Virgin! *(Memorare, &c.)*

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FORTY-EIGHTH MEDITATION.

Fourth Word of Jesus on the Cross.

"And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole earth until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying: Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabacthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Mark xv. 33, 34).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Figure to yourself Mount Calvary shrouded in darkness; the enemies of Jesus, seized with fear, are departing; the adorable Victim is on the Cross, some of the soldiers remaining to guard it.

2nd Prelude. Divine Jesus, grant that the blindness of the Jews may inspire me with a salutary fear of resistance to grace, and deign to make me understand why Thou hast suffered so much.

1st Point. Why Jesus Christ permitted the earth to be enveloped in darkness.

"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over the whole earth, until the ninth hour" (Matt. xxvii. 45). Let us not be weary of seeking in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in the fathomless depths of His infinite charity, the cause of all the torments He endures, and of all the prodigies He works. The universal darkness of nature is a testimony rendered to His divinity by the inanimate creation; but He is not occupied with His own glory at this moment, He is only seeking to excite in the souls of His murderers a salutary fear, that may move them to repentance, and cause them to mingle their tears of penitence with the Sacred Blood He is shedding for them. What goodness! But what obduracy on the part of the Jews! The miraculous darkness affects them not, because their obstinacy in evil shrouds their mind and heart in darkness infinitely greater, which prevents them from recognising by so many external signs the Godhead of Him whom they

have nailed to the Cross. Such then, O Jesus, are the awful results of resistance to grace; such is then the excess of obduracy to which first infidelities may lead! I ought not then to be astonished at the interior reproaches with which Thou visitest me when I have the misfortune to fall into any; Thy love wishes to preserve me from the dangerous calm into which those souls relapse who offend Thee without remorse. I bless Thee for it, O my God, and beg of Thee to increase in me that holy tenderness of conscience which will not let me know any peace when I feel there is any slight offence between my soul and Thee, which has not been repaired by penance and love.

2nd Point. Why Jesus willed to be abandoned by His Father on the Cross.

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying: Eli, Eli, lamma sabacthani? that is, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matt. xxvii. 46). The holy soul of Jesus Christ, plunged in the deepest desolation, bears without the smallest consolation the weight of inexorable justice; the excess of His agony forces from His lips this submissive complaint, in which, nevertheless, is expressed the torment He endures: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Let us implore of our heavenly Father to teach us why He treats His only Son, the object of His eternal complacency, with such severity. Ah! it is because this divine Son has stood security for us; it is because "He has been wounded for our iniquities, that we may be healed through His wounds" (Isa. liii. 5). It is because He has consented for our sakes to be given over to the most dreadful torments, that we might not be given up to eternal flames! He has suffered the most cruel of all derelictions, to merit for us the necessary graces and consolations for the time of trial. The joy with which the souls of the martyrs overflowed in the midst of torments; the great courage which has upheld so many Saints in labours and conflicts; the abundant

graces, the efficaciousness of which we have ourselves experienced under difficulties, are the precious fruits of the desolation which Jesus suffered on the Cross. Our divine Master has drunk to the dregs the bitterness of His chalice, that we His disciples might have a small share only of suffering to support.

Colloquy with Jesus on the Cross. Let us adore Him; thank Him; and ask Him for grace to suffer courageously, and, above all, to preserve, in the midst of the greatest trials, an unshaken confidence in His fatherly goodness.

Resolutions. To suffer with patience and confidence in God any trials I may have to endure to-day. To follow faithfully all the inspirations of grace, that so I may be preserved from all blindness of heart.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. The chastisement that I have merited has fallen on my divine Master, and through His wounds I have been healed.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FORTY-NINTH MEDITATION.

Fifth Word of Jesus on the Cross.

"Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, said: I thirst. Now there was a vessel set there full of vinegar. And they putting a sponge full of vinegar about hyssop, put it to His mouth" (John xix. 28, 29).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 126.

2nd Prelude. O Jesus, make known to me the ardent zeal which devours Thee, and deign to inflame my heart with the same fire that consumes Thine.

1st Point. Jesus thirsts for the salvation of souls. Jesus, exhausted with the loss of blood and strength,

makes these words to be heard from the summit of the Cross: "I thirst" (John xix. 28). He speaks them much less to make known to us the thirst which torments Him than to express to us the ardent zeal which consumes Him. His Sacred Heart desires the salvation of all mankind; for all He feels an infinite love; and in the ardent desire He has to see all profit by His death, He exclaims "I thirst". The prophet king burning with the flames of divine love had said, "As the thirsty stag sighs after the fountains of living water, so does my soul thirst after Thee, O God" (Ps. xli. 1). Jesus makes use of no comparison: any simile would be too weak to express the ardour of His feelings. In two words He expresses what He feels: "I thirst". Divine Saviour, for what dost Thou thirst? For my salvation. Ah! I will labour to ensure it: happy in being able thus to alleviate Thy cruel torments. Thou thirstest for the salvation of all mankind; Thou seekest for hearts to share Thy divine ardour; Thy looks rest on me; Thou invitest me with extreme tenderness to devote myself in union with Thee to the salvation of souls so dear to Thee; Thy love offers me this means of acknowledging the choice favours with which Thou hast prevented and enriched me. Ah! my ingratitude would indeed be monstrous if I refused to second Thy designs; if I did not labour by all the means in my power to make Thy adorable Heart both known and loved.

2nd Point. Jesus wishes to communicate to us His ardent zeal for the salvation of souls.

Jesus desires to make use of us to extend the knowledge and love of Himself. His Sacred Heart has chosen us to labour in this important work; but in order that our labours may be fruitful, our hearts must be filled with the same fire that consumed His. Let us, then, go and seek this divine fire in its sacred source; let us go and plunge ourselves into the Heart of Him who has said: "I have come to cast fire upon the earth, and what do I desire but that it be enkindled?" (Luke xii.

49). A fierce flame, concentrated in a narrow furnace, seeks on all sides to escape ; and if we cease to confine it, it consumes all that surrounds it. The loving Heart of Jesus is that furnace whose flames desire only to communicate themselves. He suffers at finding so few hearts that He can make holy with the fulness of His graces. Let us, then, go and open our hearts to His sacred influences ; let us go and be enlightened and reanimated by the rays of this divine Sun of love. From the depths of His holy tabernacles, as from the height of His Cross, Jesus pours the abundance of His treasures on those who approach Him. Our unworthiness, our miseries, even our faults themselves, do not put any obstacle to the effects of His liberality, if He beholds within us a humble and a contrite heart. Let us go to Him with the most entire confidence ; let us ask of Him all the help we need ; but, above all, let us implore Him to enkindle in our soul an ardent zeal for the glory of His Sacred Heart and the salvation of sinners.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us pay Him homage of adoration and love, trying to penetrate ourselves with the most lively gratitude on beholding His ardent desire to save us. Let us ask Him, with humility and confidence, for grace to share His zeal and to labour efficaciously for our own salvation and that of our neighbour.

Resolutions. Carefully to turn to profit every opportunity that may present itself of bringing my neighbour to God. To pray for sinners, and to practise some acts of virtue with a view to obtain their conversion.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "I thirst." Grant, O my Jesus, that zeal for Thy glory may consume me.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

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FIFTIETH MEDITATION.

Sixth Word of Jesus on the Cross.

"Jesus, therefore, when He had taken the vinegar, said: It is consummated" (John xix. 30).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.
1st Prelude, page 126.
2nd Prelude. Adorable Saviour, grant me grace so profitably to employ the days which remain to me to spend in this world, that, before yielding up my soul to Thee, I may have consummated the grand work of my sanctification.
1st Point. Jesus has consummated the work of our redemption.

"It is consummated" (John xix. 30). Jesus draws near to the end of His sufferings. He looks back on the life which He commenced in the stable, and is about to finish on the Cross. He beholds every moment of that precious life faithfully employed in accomplishing the designs of His Father; He beholds all the prophecies verified in His person, His religion founded, His sacraments instituted; He beholds hell disarmed, mankind redeemed, His Father's justice satisfied; He beholds the infinite treasure of His merits prepared to enrich His Church and each one of its elect, even to the consummation of the world. He is no longer detained by anything on the earth; He has left as a legacy to His Apostles the august sacrament of His body and blood; He has promised them the Paraclete; He has commended His holy Mother to His beloved disciple; nothing remains for Him but to leave the world: all is finished. O my Jesus, what a relief it is to my heart to behold Thee arrived at length at the end of all Thy sufferings! But Thou dost not desire that I should stop at these loving sentiments. Always more occupied with my interests than with Thyself, Thy wish is by the words

—"All is finished"—to teach me that Thou hast accomplished every mystery of grace and mercy necessary for my salvation; Thou wouldst let me know that there is now no grace that I may not ask, and may not be sure of obtaining, because the work of my redemption is consummated. Ah! Lord, I cast myself with the greatest confidence at the foot of Thy Cross. O holy Father! look upon me through the wounds of Jesus, grant me the pardon of all my sins, the cure of all the miseries of my soul, the salvation of all those dear to me. Canst Thou refuse me anything?—my Saviour has consummated all.

2nd Point. We ought to consummate the work of our salvation.

Jesus has done all He can for us; but in order that His merits may be applied to us, we must in our turn fulfil the duties He has imposed on us. He has left us His example—we must imitate it; His divine instructions—we must reduce them to practice; His Sacraments—we must receive them worthily; His grace—we must co-operate with it by ardent love and constant fidelity. All is consummated on the part of Jesus, but all is not finished on our part. Each day we must accomplish in us, according to the expression of the great Apostle, what is wanting to us of His Passion (Coloss. i. 24)—that is to say, we must fulfil the necessary conditions, in order that the fruits of that sacred Passion may be applied to us. We must, then, labour in earnest at the great work of our salvation and sanctification; we must arm ourselves with courage, since the obstacles are numberless; but at the same time joy and confidence must fill our hearts, because Jesus has merited for us every grace, and offers us every assistance. O my Jesus! be my strength and my support; assist me all the days of my life, and grant me grace to be able to repeat with confidence at the hour of my death those triumphant words: "All is consummated".

Colloquy with Jesus dying. Let us return Him

humble and ardent acts of thanksgiving for all the mysteries of love that He has accomplished in our favour. Let us beg of Him to apply His merits to us; and ask of Him the necessary graces to consummate the work of our sanctification.

Resolutions. Not to neglect to-day any opportunity of advancing in virtue; and, in order to do this the more efficaciously, to unite all my actions and intentions to the merits of Jesus.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "It is consummated."

Prayer. Receive, O Lord, &c., page 31.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTY-FIRST MEDITATION.

Seventh Word of Jesus on the Cross.

"And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said: Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 126.

2nd Prelude. Divine Jesus, give me grace to imitate Thy submission and love for Thy Father; and grant that at the moment of my death I may have the happiness to give up my soul into the arms of Thy mercy.

1st Point. Jesus giving back His soul into the hands of His Father teaches us great virtues.

"And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said: Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46). Jesus ends His precious life by an act of adoration, abandonment, and love. To understand the perfection of this act, let us consider under what circumstances and in what interior dispositions Jesus produced it. He had just borne the whole weight of divine justice; He

was still suffering the cruel dereliction which caused Him to cry out: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matt. xxvii. 46). And it is at this moment, when the anger of His Father weighs heaviest on Him, that He gives back His soul to Him. He yields it up to Him to acknowledge with the most profound submission His sovereign dominion over all His creatures. He returns it to Him with the most entire confidence, giving Him the sweet name of Father, to honour Him by a love the purer, as it has been the more proved by suffering. Such would be my sentiments when the hand of God is heavy upon me, if, like my adorable Master, I recognised the love of God, my Father. Jesus knew that the rigours of this God of justice are only exercised for a time over those He loves, and that even His justice forces Him to cause the sufferings of this life to be followed by the repose and enjoyment of a happy eternity for His elect. He knew, moreover, how greatly God is honoured by filial confidence preserved in the midst of the severest trials; and it was to procure Him that glory of which He is so jealous that He exclaimed: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46). Let us compare ourselves with our adorable Model! Are our sentiments like His? Is our conduct similar to His? O my Jesus, put a stop to my prolonged infidelities; sustain my weakness by Thy powerful grace, and deign to inspire me with the courage necessary to imitate all Thy divine virtues.

2nd Point. Jesus, in returning His soul into His Father's hands, has merited great graces for us.

"Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." It is not only to render homage to the supreme majesty of His Father that Jesus gives back His soul to Him. He desires, moreover, by the offering of His holy and perfect soul, to dispose His heavenly Father to receive ours also favourably, if, on leaving this world, we are united to Him by grace and love. In yielding up His soul to God, He presents to Him all the souls of the just, and engages

Him to show mercy to them through His infinite merits. O my Saviour, what a source of confidence for me! Yes, at the moment when I shall leave this world, when I shall press to my dying lips the crucifix which will have been presented to me, when I shall implore the infinite mercy of Thy Father, I may assure myself that Thou hast already offered my soul to Him, and that He has accepted it in union with Thine. Yes, I may even believe that, ready to forget my numberless offences, He opens His fatherly arms to admit me into His heavenly kingdom. Oh, yes, my Saviour, I have the sweet assurance of this; no matter what may have been the number and grievousness of my past sins, if sanctifying grace unites me to Thy merits, I shall experience the effects of the graces which Thou hast procured for me by dying on the Cross. Grant, then, O my divine Master, that, living in that holiness which becomes a true child of Thy heavenly Father, I may deserve to be able to say to Him with assurance in my last moments: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit"

Colloquy with Jesus dying. Let us thank Him with ardent love and lively gratitude for having deigned to remember us in that awful moment, and to recommend our souls to His Father in giving up His own to Him. Let us beg Him to apply His merits to us, and to prepare us, by the imitation of His virtues, to unite our death to His precious death. Let us give up our souls from this moment into the hands of our heavenly Father, that so He may dispose of them according to His good pleasure.

Resolutions. To do each one of my actions with as much care and fervour as if it were to be the last of my life. Often to offer myself to my heavenly Father in union with Jesus dying.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Prayer. Receive, O Lord, &c., page 31.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTY-SECOND CONTEMPLATION.

Jesus Expires upon the Cross.—Application of the Senses.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said: Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit; and saying this, He gave up the ghost" (Luke xxiii. 46).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself again Mount Calvary covered with darkness, Jesus on the Cross, and His blessed Mother, with St. John and the holy women, standing at the foot of it.

3rd Prelude. O my Jesus, Thou hast died for me; grant me grace to live for Thee alone.

1st Point. Sight. Let us gaze by turns on the sacred Victim painfully hanging from the wood of His sacrifice; on Mary, bathed in the blood of her dear Son, her heart transfixed with the sword of sorrow; on the beloved Apostle, who is enduring a martyrdom of love; on Magdalen, whose lips and whose heart are alike fastened to the Cross, and whose tears flow in abundance; on the rest of the holy women, who are also plunged in the deepest grief. O my Jesus, shall I be the only one taking no part in the sorrows of Thy faithful friends? shall I behold Thy frightful torments and precious death with dry eyes?

2nd Point. Hearing. Listen to the sighs and sobs which are to be heard around. Jesus utters a loud cry, and with a strong voice pronounces these words: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46). Then He bows His head, and breathes forth His last sigh. The lamentations are redoubled. O my God, grant that they may re-echo even to the bottom of my heart, to soften its hardness, and draw from it tears of contrition and love.

3rd Point. Smell. Let us inhale the odour of the sacrifice which has just been consummated; it has as-

cended even to the throne of God; soon it will diffuse itself throughout the whole world, to gain souls to Jesus in all places. Let us give our hearts to Him, and offer ourselves in union with Him to the divine Majesty.

4th Point. Taste. Let us humbly beg of Mary to introduce us into her maternal heart, that we may taste the bitterness with which it is filled. Let us ask her to communicate to us a share of her love for our adorable Saviour, and teach us how to unite ourselves to His sufferings.

5th Point. Touch. Let us kiss in spirit that precious Cross, empurpled with the blood of our divine King. Let us allow this divine blood to flow copiously over us, that we may be washed from all our stains; let us receive it into our hearts, to cure their vices and adorn them with all virtues; let us kiss the feet of our adorable Saviour with respect, and mingle our tears with the blood which still flows from them, begging Him, with all the ardour of which we are capable, to impress His divine wounds so vividly on our hearts, that we may never come to lose the remembrance of them.

Colloquy with Mary sorrowing. Thank her with lively gratitude for the consent she gave to sacrifice her Son for our sakes. Ask her for grace to weep over our sins, and to become more and more inflamed with love for our divine Saviour, who has so loved us as to lay down His life for us.

Resolutions. To unite everything we may have that is painful to bear to-day to the sacrifice of Jesus and the sorrows of His holy Mother. To avoid with care the smallest faults.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. O my Jesus, since Thou hast died for me, I desire no longer to live save for Thee alone.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTY-THIRD MEDITATION.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

"And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, gave up the ghost" (Luke xxiii. 46).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself Mount Calvary, and Jesus on the Cross.

2nd Prelude. O my Jesus, apply to me the fruits of Thy divine sacrifice, by making me love and embrace the Cross.

1st Point. Jesus expiring on the Cross gives us lessons of every virtue.

Behold our God, our Saviour, our Master, and our Model raised on the Cross, a spectacle to the whole world! Let us draw near and receive instruction at the foot of the pulpit from which He preached so many sublime truths. What ought a Christian to hate, esteem, and love, who has seen Jesus expire in the midst of humiliations and torments? He ought to hate sin, and all that may lead to it. He ought to esteem the Cross, namely, the humiliations, pains, and trials of this life, since it is by the Cross that Jesus has saved us, and by the Cross alone that we can apply His merits to ourselves and acknowledge His love. A Christian ought to love Jesus Christ: what other object is there worthy of his heart? But whoever loves Jesus ought to desire to resemble Him; for love tends to union, and union demands conformity. Divine Jesus, how happy are those souls who have the generosity to embrace Thy Cross, to take delight in it, and remain constantly fastened to it with Thee! I look on them with holy envy; why, then, have I not the courage to imitate them? Ah! Lord, if I am too weak to take upon me voluntary sufferings, grant that I may at least receive with submission those that it may please Thee to send to me.

2nd Point. Jesus dying on the Cross merits for us every grace.

Let us draw near to the foot of the Cross of Jesus, and collect together all the graces which flow from it in abundance. Graces of conversion—many of those who witnessed the death of the Son of God returned striking their breasts. Graces of sanctification—a penitent thief is made fit to enter paradise on that same day. Graces of victory —hell is put to shame, and the powers of darkness disarmed by the death of our Saviour. Lastly, graces of deliverance—the holy souls detained in captivity in Limbo for so many ages are set at liberty at this very moment. Let us, then, draw near, to be converted, renewed, and sanctified ; let us approach, that we may gain a glorious victory over the powers of darkness, and be freed for ever from the bonds of our iniquities and bad habits. The divine Blood which flows from the Cross is a sovereign remedy which cures all evils, a fruitful and inexhaustible source from whence we may enrich ourselves with every blessing. O my Saviour, what ought I not to hope for? It is for me that Thy painful sacrifice has been accomplished ; it is for my salvation that the holy mountain still sends forth the exhalations of Thy blood. Canst Thou refuse me anything after having loved me to such an extent as to sacrifice Thy life for me?

Colloquy with Jesus on the Cross. Let us testify gratitude, love, and compassion for Him. Let us ask of Him a horror for sin, compunction, a spirit of penance, confidence in Him, &c.

Resolution. To support willingly whatever humiliations and troubles divine Providence may please to send me to-day.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Let me live for Jesus Christ, since He has died for me.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTY-FOURTH CONTEMPLATION.

The Prodigies which took place at the Death of Jesus Christ.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And behold the veil of the Temple was rent in two from the top even to the bottom; the earth quaked, the rocks were rent, and the graves were opened" (Matt. xxvii. 51, 52). "Now the Centurion, seeing what was done, glorified God, saying: Indeed this was the Son of God. And all the multitude of them that were come together to that sight, and saw the things that were done, returned striking their breasts" (Luke xxiii. 47, 48; Mark xv. 39).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself anew Mount Calvary, and Jesus on the Cross.

3rd Prelude. Divine Jesus! grant me grace to apply to my soul the fruits of Thy precious death.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: the sacred Body of our adorable Saviour hanging on the Cross without motion or life. Contemplate that divine Head, still crowned with sharp thorns, but which, not able any longer to support Itself, is bowed down and motionless. His limbs are all covered with blood; His divine Body is livid, and bruised, and wounded from head to foot. O adorable Victim, how dear has my salvation cost Thee! O my Jesus, each one of Thy wounds and gashes is like an eloquent mouth powerfully preaching to me the necessity of giving Thee my heart: how can I refuse to do so? Let us also look on Mary, on St. John, and on the holy women. Oh, how deep is their grief! The enemies of Jesus and the soldiers are going away. They are all seized with terror.

2nd and 3rd Points. Listen to the Words and consider the Actions: Jesus speaks no more. That sacred mouth, the organ of the wisdom of God itself, is now closed in death! but oh! how eloquent is that silence:

it teaches us what sin is, what the justice of God is, but, above all, what the love of the divine Heart of Jesus is. Jesus is silent; but all nature is afflicted at His death, and publishes His divinity. The rocks are rent, the earth quakes, the graves are opened. Listen to the awful noise caused by the rending of the veil of the Temple, henceforth no longer to be the dwelling of the Lord. The Jews are in the greatest consternation; the murderers of the Son of God wander about seized with terror; the soldiers placed at the foot of the Cross to guard it, and the Centurion who commands them, proclaim aloud His divinity,—they descend from the holy mountain striking their breasts and confessing their guilt. And shall we remain without remorse? Under the old law God commanded, when any murder had been committed without the perpetrator of it being known, that all the children of Israel should come forward, and, laying their hands on the corpse, should protest, in the name of Heaven and earth, that they had had nothing to do with the crime. Jesus has been sacrificed to the most barbarous fury. Can we call God to witness, in the presence of His lifeless corpse covered with wounds, our innocence of His death? Alas! each sin we have committed has contributed to that dreadful death: can we still be satisfied to go on in our sins?

Colloquy with God the Father. Let us offer to His supreme Majesty the sacrifice of His Son, begging Him to forgive us our sins. Let us ask Him, through the intercession of the blessed Virgin, for a tender devotion to the Passion of Jesus, a lively horror of sin, and a true spirit of repentance.

Resolutions. Not to refuse my Lord to-day any one of the little sacrifices He may ask of me. To unite them to the death of my divine Master, and offer them to Him in expiation of my sins.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Jesus has loved me, and delivered Himself up to torments and death for me."

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.
Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTY-FIFTH MEDITATION.

The Soul of Jesus descends into Limbo.

The Apostle St. Peter, in his First Epistle (chap. iii. 19), teaches us that the soul of our Lord Jesus Christ, when separated from His body, went down to the place where the souls of the just were detained who died before His coming into the world. This truth will form the subject of the following Meditation.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Let us picture to ourselves the place where the holy souls had waited from the beginning of the world in expectation of the Redeemer promised to the posterity of Adam.

2nd Prelude. Grant me grace, O Jesus, to draw from this Meditation a more intimate knowledge of Thy divine Heart, and an ardent desire of Heaven.

1st Point. With what sentiments did Jesus go down into Limbo?

Scarcely was the holy Soul of Jesus separated from His body than it descended to the abode where reposed the souls of the just, who had died before His coming. Why so much eagerness to visit these souls? Why is the divine Soul of Jesus occupied with the care of consoling the saints of the Old Law and of drawing them forth from their long captivity, instead of thinking of Himself and of the great happiness He has just purchased at the price of so much suffering? Ah! it is because the charity of Jesus did not end with His life; it is because, always a Saviour and a Father, He has but one desire, that of making His children happy. That which He has been during His life He still continues to be after death, and will be the same for all eternity: kind,

gracious, generous, and full of love. How can we refuse to give our heart to a Saviour who merits it by so many titles? Above all, how shall we refuse Him that worship which He prefers to every other, namely, the work of imitating Him, and of making our hearts like to His Sacred Heart?

2nd Point. What was the joy of the holy souls in Limbo, when Jesus descended into the midst of them?

Let us figure to ourselves, if possible, the joy experienced by the saints of the Old Law when they beheld the Redeemer, whom they had for so many ages hailed in desire, show Himself at length to them, and admit them for ever to the happiness of rejoicing in His holy presence. Oh! what bliss for those holy patriarchs who for such a length of time had awaited the divine Messias! What joy for the last and most favoured of them all, for St. Joseph, who had so loved Jesus during his life, who had expired in His arms, and who for many years had suffered so much in beholding himself deprived of His adorable presence! What joy for Anne and for Joachim, those chosen spouses according to the Heart of God, who had brought into the world the immaculate Mother of the divine Saviour! What joy for the prophets who had announced Him, for John the Baptist who had pointed Him out to the Jews as the Lamb of God, come to efface the sins of the world! What joy for the holy and good Simeon, who had esteemed himself so happy to hold in his arms for an instant the Saviour of Israel, subject to all the weakness of infancy! In a word, what joy for all these holy souls! Ah! let us congratulate them on their happiness; let us rejoice at it; but, above all, let us remember that it will one day be our own, if, like them, we persevere to the end in the love and service of the Lord.

Colloquy with the holy Soul of Jesus Christ. Let us render Him, in union with the saints of the Old Law, homage of adoration, gratitude, and love. Let us beg

Him to detach our hearts from the earth, and cause them to long after their heavenly country. Let us ask of Him the graces which we stand in need of to disengage our souls from their bad inclinations, and render them capable of ascending to Heaven in affection and desire.

Resolutions. To encourage myself with the thought of Heaven. To overcome my faults, and vanquish the obstacles that may tend to stop me in the way of my salvation.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. What is it to gain Heaven?

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTY-SIXTH MEDITATION.

The Side of Jesus is pierced with a Lance.

"Then the Jews (because it was the Paraseeve) that the bodies might not remain upon the Cross on the Sabbath-day (for that was a great Sabbath-day) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. The soldiers came and executed this order; but seeing that Jesus was already dead, they did not break His bones. But one of the soldiers opened His side with a spear, and there came out blood and water" (John xix. 31-34).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself Mount Calvary and the sacred Body of Jesus still hanging on the Cross.

2nd Prelude. Adorable Heart of Jesus, teach me why Thou didst will that Thy side should be opened by the soldier's spear, and deign to receive me in that sacred wound.

1st Point. The Sacred Heart of Jesus was opened for all mankind. "The soldiers, seeing that Jesus was already dead, did not break His legs, but one of them opened His side with a spear" (John xix. 33, 34). The

entire life of our adorable Saviour was employed in showing His infinite love for us. His mildness towards sinners and weak souls; His tender compassion for the afflicted; His touching kindness, which never rejected any one; and, above all, the boundless generosity with which He died for us, left no reason to doubt His dispositions towards ourselves. Yet, as though He feared that so many proofs of His immense charity were still insufficient, and that we should not comprehend to its full extent the excess of His love for us, He permitted that His divine Heart should be opened with a lance, after His death, in order to give us the last drop of His blood, and to show us the depths of that adorable Heart, the source of all His tender and generous sentiments. This divine Master had said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself" (John xii. 32). Ah! is it not at this moment that He fulfils that promise? What heart can resist Him, or refuse to hasten to Him and plunge into that adorable Heart opened to all? O Sacred Heart of my Jesus! Thou hast said: "Knock and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke xi. 9). That promise is now become useless; I have no need to knock; the door is open; Thou callest me Thyself into Thy divine sanctuary. O infinitely amiable Heart! accept me now without reserve; enclose me in that sacred wound, and never suffer me to be so unhappy as to leave it.

2nd Point. The divine Heart of Jesus, open to all mankind, will no more be closed.

Jesus is not like the rest of men; the latter are inconstant in their affections; they are soon weary of loving! their dispositions change according to circumstances; but He is ever a faithful Friend, ever a tender Father, and most generous Benefactor, who has always loved mankind, and will do so to the end. Neither their miseries, which are known to Him, nor their ingratitude, which pierces His Sacred Heart so acutely, nor their obstinate resistance to the advances of His tenderness, is capable of weakening the immense charity

He entertains for them. That we might the better understand this new mystery of love, Jesus did not permit the lance which pierced His loving Heart, and opened it for us, to inflict the wound till after death, because wounds given then never close again. O divine Heart! Thou wilt then always remain open for such as with sincere repentance, tender love, and lively gratitude shall draw near to enter Thy sacred wound. Ah! for nineteen centuries Thou hast not closed, but hast remained open to wait for me. What goodness! what bounty! O Sacred Heart of my Jesus, would that I had a thousand hearts to offer Thee! Ah! receive at least the one which I have so long refused Thee, and take possession of it henceforth, for ever, and without division.

Colloquy with the divine Heart of Jesus. Let us adore it as the abyss of that immense charity of which our adorable Saviour has given us so many striking proofs. Let us ask pardon for having so long resisted the advances of His love. Let us consecrate our hearts wholly to Him, begging Him to possess them and reign over them for ever.

Resolution. To offer all my actions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, striving to perform them with all the purity of intention in my power.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Let me imagine to myself that the wounded Heart of Jesus thus speaks to me: "I have loved Thee with an everlasting love" (Jerem. xxxi. 3).

Prayer. Open to me Thy Sacred Heart, O Jesus; show me its charms; unite me to it for ever; grant that every breath I draw, even every palpitation of my heart during sleep, may be so many testimonies of my love, saying to Thee unceasingly: Yes, Lord, I am all Thine; accept of the little good I do; grant me grace to repair all the evil I do, that so I may bless Thee during this life, and praise Thee for all eternity in the next. Amen.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTY-SEVENTH MEDITATION.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

"The soldiers, seeing that Jesus was already dead, did not break His legs; but one of them opened His side with a spear" (John xix. 33, 34).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.
1st Prelude, page 144.
2nd Prelude. Adorable Jesus, deign to receive me within Thy Sacred Heart, and there keep me so firmly enshrined that I may never be able to leave it more.

1st Point. Jesus has opened His Sacred Heart to us that we may make it our refuge and abode.

Jesus, during His life, weeping over the guilty city that was so soon to demand His death, thus expressed His grief: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not!" (Matt. xxiii. 37). That was a touching comparison; yet it was still very far from what we witness at the present moment! It is not under His wings, or in His arms, that Jesus gathers together those who have recourse to Him, but within His own loving Heart. It is there that He receives sinners, to shelter them from the justice of His Father. It is there that He admits the innocent, to preserve them from the dangers which surround them. It is also therein that He assembles tepid and languishing souls, to reanimate them, to warm them with the fire of His love, to cure them by virtue of His adorable Blood, and to cause them to draw life from its own source. O sacred abode! O dwelling of peace! O Sacred Heart! how can I keep at a distance from Thee? Ah! Thou containest every good, even all the treasures of eternal life. Mayest Thou then become henceforward my only dwelling of repose, both in time and eternity!

2nd Point. Jesus has opened His Sacred Heart to us that we may enter into it, there to learn every virtue.

"Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of Heart" (Matt. xi. 29), was the saying of our divine Master when He lived among men. It is no longer by His words that He instructs us; it is by His Sacred Heart, which He opens before us as a sacred book, from which we may learn every virtue; and to which He invites us as to a divine school, where He teaches us in a most amiable manner to penetrate ourselves with His spirit, and conform ourselves to His sentiments. His Sacred Heart is an ocean of light; of that pure light which enlightened the saints. It is an abyss of love, where all may go and learn how they ought to love God, and how they ought to be inflamed with zeal for their own salvation as well as for the salvation of others. To all those happy souls who are willing to receive His lessons, the Sacred Heart of Jesus communicates His meekness, His humility, His generosity, His zeal, His obedience, to His Father, and His tender love for all mankind. O loving Heart of my Jesus! adorable Master of all our hearts, deign to form mine to the practice of every virtue; enlighten it, direct it, and never permit it to wander from the path which Thou hast marked out for it.

Colloquy with the divine Heart of Jesus. Let us adore it as our Refuge and Master. Let us beg of it to receive us into its very centre, to discover to us its secrets, and to render our hearts like itself by the imitation of its virtues.

Resolutions. To practise recollection, and frequently during the day to shut myself up within the Sacred Heart of Jesus, begging to be made conformable to Him.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of Heart, and you shall find rest to your souls" (Matt. xi. 29).

Prayer. Open to me Thy Sacred Heart, &c., page 146.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTY-EIGHTH MEDITATION.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

"The soldiers, seeing that Jesus was already dead, did not break His legs; but one of them opened His side with a spear, and there came out blood and water" (John xix. 33, 34).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.
1st Prelude, page 144.
2nd Prelude. Divine Jesus, grant me grace to know and love Thy adorable Heart more and more.

1st Point. Jesus has willed that His Sacred Heart should be wounded, to show us that it is the source of every grace.

Jesus has done everything for men, and all has been done through love. From His Sacred Heart have emanated the instructions He has addressed to them, the benefits He has granted them, and the graces He has so abundantly lavished on them. It was His Sacred Heart which made Him give Himself over to His enemies, and caused Him to remain fastened to the Cross when they blasphemously defied Him to come down; it was His Sacred Heart which gave us His last sigh. After His death, from His loving Heart every grace has still to flow. These graces are contained in the treasure of the Sacraments; and, to the end that we might never mistake the source from whence they flow, He willed that the soldier's lance should draw forth blood and water from His sacred side, to be signs of the saving waters of Baptism and of the precious Blood destined to sanctify us in the Blessed Eucharist. O sacred wound of the open Heart of my Jesus, of Thee the prophet spoke when he said: "You shall draw water with joy out of the Saviour's fountains; and you shall say in that day: Blessed be the Lord because He is good" (Isa. xii. 3, 4). Yes, my Jesus, I experience the effects of those magnificent promises. Ah! never permit that my ingratitude

should dry up for me that precious and copious fountain.

2nd Point. Jesus willed that His Sacred Heart should be pierced, to manifest His interior sufferings.

For what other reason has Jesus willed that His Sacred Heart should be pierced? In order, by that visible wound, to represent to us the invisible wound which the ingratitude of man had inflicted on His loving Heart, let us not deceive ourselves on this subject. Our Lord's exterior and bodily sufferings were not the most painful ones He endured during His cruel Passion: He suffered in His Sacred Heart especially. That Heart, so delicate and sensitive, drained to the dregs the bitterness of His chalice. Without speaking of the profound humiliations with which it was saturated, and of what He suffered from the desertion of His Apostles, from the grief of His holy Mother, or from the fearful abandonment in which His heavenly Father left Him on the Cross, He foresaw that the greater number of those for whom He was about to shed His blood would not love Him, but would be lost, notwithstanding all His sufferings; and this foresight was more painful to Him than a thousand deaths. Oh, what sadness His must have been! Alas! that sadness still continues, even to this day. From within the sacred tabernacles He makes unto us these touching complaints: O My child—you upon whom I have been pleased to shower so many benefits—"Attend, and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow" (Lament. i. 12). "What more could I have done for My people that I have not done?" (Isa. v. 4). "Alas! I have brought up children, and they have despised Me" (Isa. i. 2). They have gone far from Me; they have made a double wound in My Heart—that of love and that of grief. O my Jesus! can I be insensible to what Thou didst suffer, and not rather try to repair such base ingratitude by my love and by my tears? Lord, I consecrate myself to Thee as a victim of repa-

ration to Thy Sacred Heart; I devote myself, in quality of an apostle, to diffuse everywhere, if possible, its knowledge and its love.

Colloquy with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Let us adore it as the source of every grace. Let us endeavour to excite within us a tender compassion for all He suffered, and for all He still suffers, from the ingratitude of man; let us ask His pardon for our infidelities; and offer and consecrate ourselves to Him, to repair the glory outraged in His love.

Resolution. To go several times in the day—in spirit, at least—to the foot of the tabernacle, and there make a reparation of honour to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for the ingratitude of men.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Behold this Heart, which has so loved man, and which is so little loved by them."

Prayer. Open to me Thy Sacred Heart, &c., page 146.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTY-NINTH CONTEMPLATION.

THE BODY OF JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "Joseph of Arimathea, because he was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave leave" (John xix. 38).

2nd Prelude. Still represent to yourself Calvary and the Cross.

3rd Prelude. O afflicted Heart of Mary! obtain for me the grace to draw from this Meditation an ardent love for Jesus, and a tender compassion for His sufferings.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: on Mount Calvary, the adorable body of our Saviour hanging on the Cross; Mary plunged in a sea of grief; St. John; the holy women; the Angels adoring in silence the lifeless

body, which is that of God; at Jerusalem, the people agitated by a thousand fears; the chief priests still more terrified. Ah! if they would but open their hearts to repentance. The blood they have just shed cries out for mercy. O Sacred Blood, Thou art my only hope! Let us also behold Joseph of Arimathea: he is thinking of rendering the last honours to the sacred body of his Saviour and his God. Happy is he to procure for himself so precious a trust. Why do I envy him? Jesus has confided to me that same sacred body; and if I desire it, will again do so. He will deposit it, living and glorious, in the centre of my heart. O love! O goodness!

2nd and 3rd Points. Listen to the Words, and consider the Actions: on Mount Calvary, silence, recollection, grief, and love. In the city, tumult and agitation—every one talking of the prodigies that had taken place. Joseph of Arimathea presents himself before Pilate. He asks and obtains permission to take down the precious body of Jesus. O divine Body, Thou wast a treasure of which any one was at liberty to dispose. Joseph of Arimathea, aided by Nicodemus and others, mounts up to the Cross, and unfastens respectfully the sacred Victim of our salvation. See how they draw out, one after the other, those nails covered with the blood of God; how Magdalen contemplates with love and compassion those deep and cruel wounds; and then how the lifeless and wounded body is deposited in the arms of His holy Mother. O Mary, Queen of Martyrs! what grief, what bereavement, are now thine! She clasps to her heart her divine Son, the only object of her love; she gazes on Him lovingly; she covers Him with her tears. O my Mother! behold now the moment arrived that, for three-and-thirty years, thy immaculate Heart has foreseen with such dread! Those eyes, so gentle and so pure, whose glance has so often met thine, are now closed in death! Those hands, whose first caresses thou didst receive; those feet which thou didst swathe, and whose first steps

thou didst direct and support, are pierced through with dreadful wounds; that Sacred Heart which thou didst so much love is drained of blood, and opened by a large and deep wound. O my Mother! thy tears flow; love has inflicted on thee a martyrdom beyond belief. Alas! my sins have caused thy sorrows! Grant that I may detest them, that I may weep over them, and that my heart may unite itself to thine to love that divine Saviour who paid so great a price for my soul.

Colloquy with Mary in desolation. Let us say to her all that affection, compassion, contrition, and love shall inspire us to say; and beg her to apply to us the merits of the death of Jesus, and to inspire us with the most tender and ardent love for Him.

Resolution. To suffer willingly, in union with Mary, whatever interior or exterior trials our Lord may please to send me to-day.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. O Mary, Mother of love and of sorrow! love gave thee the Cross; obtain that the Cross may give me love.

Prayer. O most desolate of all Mothers, what a fearful sword has pierced thy soul! All the blows Jesus received have fallen on thee; all His pains have oppressed thee; all His wounds have bruised thee; but, above all, the last farewell He addressed to thee from the height of the Cross re-opened all thy sorrows; and when thou didst behold Him breathe forth His last sigh, what supernatural strength upheld thy soul in that sad moment? O Mother of love and of sorrow! make me love and suffer after thy example! .Queen of sorrows, give me a share in thy martyrdom; love has given thee the Cross, grant that the Cross may give me love; and, if in order to love it be necessary to suffer and to die, obtain for me the grace to love all that comes from God, even sufferings and death. Amen.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SIXTIETH MEDITATION.

Jesus is placed in the Sepulchre.

"And Nicodemus also came, he who at the first came to Jesus by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. They took therefore the body of Jesus, and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now there was in the place where He was crucified a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein no man yet had been laid. There, therefore, because of the parasceve of the Jews, they laid Jesus, because the sepulchre was nigh at hand" (John xix. 39-42).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself Calvary, with the sepulchre hewn out of the rock.

2nd Prelude. Grant, O my Jesus, that I may always receive Thy adorable Body in a heart well prepared, and that I may imitate the virtues of which, even after death, Thou dost continue to give me such striking examples.

1st Point. The circumstances which attend the burial of Jesus represent to us the dispositions with which we ought to approach Holy Communion.

Why is the Body of Jesus wrapt in perfumes and placed in a new sepulchre? These circumstances, which divine Providence intentionally permitted, ought to serve to render the resurrection of our divine Saviour more incontestable; but we may also draw from them other teachings. The new sepulchre, in which no one had yet been laid, represents the purity of heart necessary to receive worthily the sacred Body of Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. It was dug out of the rock, to point to the firmness with which a soul, assisting at this heavenly banquet, should guard against the temptations of the spirit of darkness, and resist his attacks. The perfumes are the types of humility, recollection, holy desire, tender piety, and every other virtue that Jesus desires to find in the souls He visits. They are also the symbols

of the edification which a person should give who is nourished with the adorable flesh and blood of his Saviour and his God. O my Jesus, place within me Thyself these holy dispositions; make me practise those virtues which please Thee; render me worthy to participate frequently of Thy holy banquet, that I may there taste how sweet Thou art, and enrich my soul with all the treasures there offered me.

2nd Point. Jesus in the tomb is still our Master and our Model.

"And Joseph laid the Body in his own new monument; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the monument, and went his way" (Matt. xxvii. 60). Let us draw near to this sacred Body, reposing in the sepulchre; it is deprived of life; but from the depths of the silent tomb it still addresses to us striking lessons; its solitude teaches us to seek our Lord with an interior and recollected spirit. The obscurity which surrounds it instructs us to conceal the good we do from the eyes of creatures, and seek no witness of it but God, whose sight pierces through the depths of the abyss, and penetrates even to the most secret foldings of the heart. It is motionless, and opposes no resistance to anything they wish to do with it; it lets itself be wrapt up in linen cloths, and deposited in the tomb; and, if it were wished, it would allow itself to be transported to any other place. Such should be our dependence on the will of our Lord; such our abandonment to the conduct of His providence. O Sacred Heart of my Jesus, it was not enough for Thee to have given me during Thy life such an example of humility, obedience, and the spirit of prayer; after death Thou must again frequently repeat these precious lessons! Ah! grant that my heart may be docile to them, and that it may practise faithfully the virtues so dear to Thee.

Colloquy with Jesus in the Sepulchre. Let us return Him our homages of adoration, gratitude, and love. Let us beg Him to communicate to our hearts the purity

and other necessary dispositions for receiving Him worthily in the Holy Communion; and ask of Him also the grace to profit by the lessons of virtue which He has taught us from the sepulchre.

Resolution. To practise to-day recollection and humility.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "My life ought to be hidden in God with Jesus Christ."

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

The Glorious Life of our Lord.

FIRST CONTEMPLATION.

The Resurrection of our Lord.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And behold there was a great earthquake. For an Angel of the Lord descended from Heaven: and coming, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. And his countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow; and for fear of him the guards were struck with terror, and became as dead men" (Matt. xxviii. 2-4).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself the garden, and the sepulchre resplendent with light.

3rd Prelude. Divine Jesus, deign to replenish my soul with holy joy, and teach me to profit by the fruits of Thy Resurrection.

1st and 2nd Points. Consider the Persons and the Actions. The morning twilight begins to dawn, the guards watch around, the sepulchre still closed. The soul of Jesus Christ transports itself thither, escorted by all the holy souls of the Old Law, whom He wills to make witnesses of His Resurrection. This great mystery is about to be accomplished. But let us stop for an instant and, with the holy patriarchs, contemplate the lifeless Body of our divine Saviour reposing in the tomb. It is

covered with wounds, and still bears the impress of suffering on its august features. But on a sudden a rapid change takes place in it; those wounds, which but an instant ago called forth grief and compassion, have become resplendent. The eternal diadem has replaced the crown of thorns. Jesus triumphs over death, and His sepulchre is filled with glory. The Angels intone the hymns of triumph and the songs of victory.

3rd Point. Listen to the words. Let us hearken to the chorus of praise and benediction with which the heavenly spirits salute the adorable Conqueror. Alleluia! Alleluia! He has conquered, "the Lion of the Tribe of Judah" (Apoc. v. 5). "O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" (1 Cor. xv. 55). "The Lord hath reigned, He is clothed with beauty" (Ps. xcii. 1). The holy souls delivered by Jesus from Limbo mingle their voices with those of the celestial spirits. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, they exclaim, to receive glory and honour and power; because Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God in Thy blood" (Apoc. iv. 11; v. 9).

4th Point. Let us consider how the Divinity of Jesus Christ, which was hidden, so to speak, during His Passion, manifests itself now. What glory! What splendour! O my Saviour! What joy for me to see Thee now thus triumphant!

Colloquy with Jesus risen again. Let us ask Him for spiritual joy and the grace to rise again with Him, by beginning to lead a new life full of fervour and edification. Let us beg Him to bestow on us all the graces of which we stand in need.

Resolutions. To pass the day in holy joy, keeping ourselves united to Jesus risen, and abstaining carefully from the smallest faults.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Jesus my hope is risen.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SECOND MEDITATION.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS IS THE MODEL OF OURS.

"And behold there was a great earthquake. For an Angel of the Lord descended from Heaven: and coming, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. And his countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow. And for fear of him the guards were struck with terror and became as dead men" (Matt. xxviii. 2-4).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself anew the glory of the Sepulchre of Jesus.

2nd Prelude. O my Jesus, grant me grace to rise again with Thee, and never more to die.

1st Point. The resurrection of Jesus is the model of our spiritual resurrection.

Jesus was put to death for our sins, and He has risen again for our justification, says the holy Apostle St. Paul. But if we desire that the fruits of this great mystery shall be fully applied to us, we must on our part do all that depends on us to imitate the resurrection of our adorable Model. Jesus comes forth from the tomb.—He throws off the bandages with which His sacred body had been enveloped. It is thus that I should arise from the state of tepidity which for so long a time has held my soul captive and motionless. Jesus is impassible.—I ought to rise above temptations, and become invulnerable to the attacks of the enemies of my salvation. The Body of Jesus is clothed with agility, subtilty, and splendour.—My fervour should know neither delays nor obstacles, and my entire life should be henceforth a bright light to glorify God and edify my neighbour. Lastly, Jesus risen dies no more:—my fervour ought to be constant and persevering. O my Saviour! if the mystery of Thy resurrection imposes great obligations on me, it offers me at the same time great graces; deign, then, to

grant me those graces which are so necessary for me; supported by them, I will not hesitate to promise Thee everything that Thy love demands of me at present.

2nd Point. The resurrection of Jesus is the pledge of our glorious resurrection.

Jesus, our Saviour, our Hope, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, has risen in glory from the tomb; like Him we shall also come forth from ours, and we shall share His glory at the last day, if during our life we have been conformed to Him in the practice of virtue. What a magnificent hope! I then may say with the same certainty as Job: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in my flesh I shall see my God" (Job xix. 25, 26). Yes, I shall contemplate His glory in this same body which is now subject to so many miseries, but which will then participate as a living and immortal member of Jesus risen again in the glory and beatitude of its divine Head. Oh! if the trials of this life seem bitter to me I ought to console myself, since they bear no proportion to the glories of the life to come. Jesus, Thy adorable Head was crowned with thorns, before wearing a diadem of glory. "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, for which cause He now receives a name above every name" (Phil. ii. 8, 9). The period of His sufferings is over; His triumph will have no end.

In like manner, after a short period of trial I shall also rise again, no more to suffer or to die. O my Jesus, may this grand hope sustain me during the days of my exile, and prepare me for the happy moment which shall unite me to Thee.

Colloquy with Jesus risen again. Let us rejoice in His glory, proclaim His triumph, and beg of Him to fill our hearts with a hope so firm as to incessantly animate our ardour, and bring us safely to the blessed term of a glorious resurrection.

Resolution. To discharge the duties of the day with holy joy, and to produce frequent acts of hope.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that in my flesh I shall see my God" (Job xix. 25, 26).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRD CONTEMPLATION.

The Holy Women and Two of the Apostles go to the Sepulchre.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought sweet spices, that coming, they might anoint Jesus. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they come to the Sepulchre, the sun being now risen. And they said one to another: Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the Sepulchre? And looking, they saw the stone rolled back; and going in, they found not the body of the Lord Jesus. Magdalene ran therefore and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith to them: They have taken away the Lord out of the Sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him. Peter therefore went out and that other disciple, and they came to the Sepulchre" (Mark xvi. 1-4; Luke xxiv. 3; John xx. 2, 3).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself the garden, and the Sepulchre hewn out of the rock.

3rd Prelude. Grant me grace, O Lord, to imitate the fervour of the holy women and the two Apostles.

1st and 2nd Points. Consider the Persons and the Actions: the holy women set out before sunrise.

Why so much diligence? Ah! it is because they love Jesus.

If I loved Him as they do, I should also hasten to seek Him. At their approach the Angel of the Lord rolls back the stone from the Sepulchre; a brilliant light surrounds him. His raiment is of a dazzling whiteness. The affrighted guards take flight. The Angel does not show himself to the holy women. Magdalene is to learn from the lips of her divine Lord Himself that He is risen. The Sepulchre is empty. Magdalene runs to tell this to the Apostles. Peter and John hasten to the place; John reaches the Sepulchre the first, but does not enter therein out of respect to him whom Jesus has already designated the head of the Apostles. Peter descends into the Sepulchre—both behold the linen cloths—they do not remember that Jesus said: "After three days I will rise again" (Matt. xxvii. 63). Such are the witnesses whose testimony we needed to strengthen our faith, quick to see, but slow to believe.

3rd Point. Listen to the Words: "Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the Sepulchre?" (Mark xvi. 3) exclaimed the holy women on the road. However, they continued their journey, for true fervour knows not what it is to be stopped by obstacles, and God Himself is ever ready to work wonders in its favour; He sends His Angel, who rolls back the stone, and puts the guards to flight. What must the holy women have said on seeing that Jesus was no longer in the tomb? No doubt they expressed their surprise, their anxiety, their grief. Jesus by this trial willed to enrich them with new merits, and prepare them for faith in the resurrection. Let us listen to the words of Magdalene to the Angels: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him" (John xx. 13). Peter and John set out forthwith; what must have been the language of their hearts on the way? Lord, I will seek Thee in the morning.

Where shall I go to find Thee? Jesus beholds their anxiety. Ah! if I did but imitate their fervour, what favours I should receive!

Colloquy with Jesus risen again. Let us beg of Him that holy eagerness in seeking Him, which is always crowned with success, and offer Him the fervour of Magdalene and the Apostles to supply for what is wanting to our own. Let us implore Him to apply to us the fruits of His resurrection.

Resolution. To seek Jesus in our prayers by a spirit of persevering fervour, and in all our actions by a pure intention, directed to Him alone.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Seek, and you shall find" (Luke xi. 9).

Prayer. Pater noster, &c.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FOURTH CONTEMPLATION.

Jesus Manifests Himself to St. Mary Magdalene.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "The two disciples therefore departed again to their own home. But Mary stood at the Sepulchre without, weeping. Now, as she was weeping, she stooped down, and looked into the Sepulchre. And she saw two Angels in white, sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been laid. And they say to her: Woman, why weepest thou? She saith to them: Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him. When she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing; and she knew not that it was Jesus" (John xx. 10-14).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself anew the garden and the Sepulchre.

3rd Prelude. Divine Jesus, grant me grace to love Thee with all my heart, that so I may share in the special graces with which Thou dost favour Thy most faithful friends.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: Magdalene bathed in tears. The Angels who guard the Sepulchre. Jesus present, though invisible. He looks with complacence on the tears and sobs of Magdalene. Divine Saviour, it is thus that Thou dost ever regard the effects of Thy love in Thy chosen souls; thus Thou dost listen to the preparation of their hearts.

2nd Point. Listen to the words: "Woman, why weepest thou?" (John xx. 13) say the Angels to Magdalene. Without being astonished at their sudden appearance, or dazzled by the splendour which surrounds them, she replies with simplicity: "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him" (John xx. 13). Jesus, touched at her grief, wishes to stop it; He renders Himself visible; she hears a slight noise, turns round and sees Him, but without knowing Him. "Woman," He says to her, "why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" (John xx. 15). Thou knowest, O Lord, the cause of her tears; why then dost Thou ask her? Ah! our divine Saviour delights in hearing us repeat the assurances of our love; she does not name Him, for it does not occur to her that another can be ignorant of whom she speaks. Let us also take notice of her words: "I will take Him away" (John xx. 15). She does not think of her own weakness. Ah! what courage love inspires when it becomes master of a heart! Then Jesus said to her: Mary! She knew Him by His voice, which inundated her with joy: in a moment she falls down at His feet, and exclaims: Master! What sentiments then filled her soul! "Do not touch Me," says Jesus to her, "for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say to them: I ascend to My Father and to your

Father, to My God and to your God" (John xx. 16, 17).

Let us meditate on each of these words: "Go tell My brethren": these were His disciples. It is ourselves that Jesus calls His Brethren, and as if this glorious title did not sufficiently express the intimacy of the relationship established between Him and us through the mysteries which He has just accomplished, He adds others yet stronger and more energetic: "Go to My brethren, and say to them: I ascend to My Father and to your Father, to My God and to your God". O my Saviour, I adore Thee, I thank Thee: mayest Thou be for ever blessed for the ineffable prodigies which Thy love has displayed in favour of Thy poor weak creatures.

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: the ardour of Magdalene in seeking the body of Jesus. The goodness exhibited by our divine Master in manifesting Himself to her. The promptness with which she obeys Him when He commands her to leave Him, and go and announce His resurrection to His disciples.

4th Point. Let us consider how the divinity of Jesus manifests itself in this mystery. Although He veils the splendour of His glory, that He may not dazzle those to whom He shows Himself, yet His adorable countenance and sacred Person display celestial joy and benign majesty. The Angels announce His triumph. His Sepulchre is resplendent with light.

5th Point. Let us call to mind with what kindness our Lord consoles His disciples, causing His resurrection to be announced to them, and giving them the sweet name of Brethren.

Colloquy with Jesus risen again. Let us adore Him, thank Him, and testify our love for Him. Let us ask of Him the grace to seek Him as ardently as Magdalene did, that we may also find Him as she did.

Resolution. To perform all our actions through love.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water; so my soul panteth after Thee, O God" (Ps. xli. 2).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTH MEDITATION.

The Holy Women Revisit the Sepulchre.

[Note.—The interpreters of Holy Scripture are divided in their opinion regarding the order in which the different appearances of the Angels and of our Lord to the holy Women took place. We have supposed here, with Père de Ligny, that they visited the Sepulchre twice, once before sunrise, accompanied by Mary Magdalene, and the second time without her, when the sun was already risen.]

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "Mary, the mother of James and Salome, came to the Sepulchre, the sun being now risen. And entering into the Sepulchre they saw a young man sitting on the right side clothed with a white robe, and they were astonished. Who saith to them, Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified: He is not here, He is risen as He said. And they went out quickly from the Sepulchre with fear and great joy. And behold Jesus met them, saying: All hail! But they came up, and took hold of His feet and adored Him. Then Jesus said to them: Fear not. Go, tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, there they shall see Me" (Mark xvi. 1, 2, 5, 6; Matt. xxviii. 6, 8-10).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself again the garden and the Sepulchre.

3rd Prelude. Divine Jesus, grant me grace to know Thy adorable Heart perfectly, and ever to pay it the homage of my love and confidence.

1st Point. The Angel reassures the holy women. "And the Angel answering, said to the women: Fear not you: for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for He is risen as He said" (Matt. xxviii. 5, 6). The Angels who guarded the Sepulchre had cast so terrific a glance on the guards as at once to put them to flight; but far from intimidating the holy women, they encourage them, saying: "Fear not". Such is still the conduct of these heavenly spirits; if they speak interiorly to sinners, it is to inspire them with a salutary fear of the judgments of God, to alarm them, and to force them to enter into themselves: but for the just they have only words of peace and love, and when they suggest to them some holy thought, or inspire them to perform some act of virtue, their communication is always accompanied in the depth of the heart, with the soothing and consoling address: "Fear not". If I desire to belong to God, if I seek Jesus sincerely, I have nothing to expect from them but light, help, and protection; every sentiment, therefore, that tends to discourage me, and to deprive my soul of the holy confidence that it ought to have in Jesus, is undoubtedly the work of the spirit of darkness, or of my own imagination. Grant me grace, O my God, to become so penetrated with these convictions that I may despise the vain phantoms which so frequently present themselves to my mind and heart, and may ever draw renewed fervour from the peace and joy of Thy Holy Spirit.

2nd Point. Jesus encourages the holy women Himself by words of peace and marks of kindness.

Let us consider how full of wisdom, goodness, and love the conduct of Jesus is towards the souls that belong to Him. Magdalene was an ardent and generous soul, capable of sustaining trials, and making sacrifices, and thereby acquiring new merit. He would not permit that she should give Him all the testimonies of her love. "Touch Me not," He says to her; "but

go quickly to My brethren" (John xx. 17). These holy women, on the contrary, are of a timid and fearful temperament: they require to be upheld and encouraged. Jesus says to them: "Fear not; all hail!" (Matt. xxviii. 9, 10). He allows them to kiss His adorable feet, and shows them many marks of kindness. What goodness, O my divine Master! Thou wast indeed right when Thou saidst: "I know My sheep" (John x. 14). Yes, Thou hast a perfect knowledge of the souls of whom Thou art the Pastor; Thou knowest their dispositions and their wants; Thou canst compassionate their weakness; and the care Thou deignest to take of them is so gentle and loving, that that of the most tender mother cannot be compared to it. How can I refuse to abandon myself with love and confidence to Thy adorable guidance! Give me, as Thou pleasest, consolation or suffering: I am indifferent to either, provided I do but advance perseveringly in Thy holy love.

Colloquy with Jesus risen again. Let us adore His wisdom, goodness, and love. Let us abandon ourselves entirely to Him, begging of Him to render us perfectly docile to the conduct of His Providence and the guidance of His Spirit.

Resolutions. Faithfully to follow all the inspirations of grace. To recognise and adore the designs of Providence in everything that befalls us.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "The Lord ruleth me, and I shall want nothing" (Ps. xxii. 1).

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SIXTH MEDITATION.

Jesus Manifests Himself to the Holy Women.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And they went out quickly from the Sepulchre. And behold Jesus met them, saying: All hail. Go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, there they shall see Me" (Matt. xxviii. 8, 9, 10).

2nd Prelude. Behold again the garden and Sepulchre.

3rd Prelude. Grant, O my Jesus, that in meditating on the tokens of Thy infinite goodness, my soul may be filled with Thy holy love, and confirmed in the fidelity which it owes Thee.

1st Point. Jesus manifests the kindness and goodness of His Sacred Heart in the manner in which He causes His resurrection to be announced to His Apostles.

The loving Heart of our divine Master is ever the same under every circumstance. Let us observe with what gentleness and precaution He prepares His disciples for the great news of His resurrection. He does not appear to them at once; their confusion would have been too great, after having abandoned Him with such cowardice at the time of His Passion. Perhaps also they would have been incapable of bearing so sudden a joy after the terrible shocks that they had but just undergone. He therefore uses all sorts of precautions. At first He lets Magdalene announce to them that His adorable Body is no longer in the tomb, in order to remind them of His promises to rise again; soon after she informs them that she has seen Him, and that He has spoken to her. He sends them a message in which He addresses them by the sweet appellation of Brethren, to make them understand that His divine Heart is still the same towards them, that their infidelity is already effaced from His remembrance,

and that when He shall appear to them they have nothing to expect but words of peace and love. O infinite Goodness! how little do I know Thee when I give way to trouble and fear after the commission of a fault! Make me apprehend that confidence and love repair our transgressions much better than immoderate fear. O God of love, teach me to do justice to Thy Sacred Heart and to offer it homage by proclaiming that it is all goodness, charity, and mercy.

2nd Point. Jesus, in giving His Apostles the title of Brethren, reveals to us mysteries of grace, which His death and resurrection have gained for us. "Go tell My brethren that they go before Me into Galilee; there they shall see Me" (Matt. xxviii. 10). Jesus, before His death, had said to His dear disciples, "I will not now call you servants but My friends" (John xv. 15). Now He goes yet further and calls them His Brethren. Why does He give them this new title? Because He has just accomplished and consummated all those mysteries of mercy in which He humbled Himself to us and exalted us even to Himself; because He has died for our sins and risen again for our justification; because His Heavenly Father, disarmed and appeased, no longer beholds in His creatures aught but the image of His only Son; and because sanctifying grace, which Jesus has merited for us by His death, makes us the adopted children of His Father and the co-heirs of His kingdom. O my Saviour! how inestimable are the benefits which Thou hast purchased for me by Thy blood! How precious and intimate are the communications which Thou hast deigned to establish between my heart and Thine! Give me the grace never to render myself unworthy of them; grant that, uniting myself closely to Thee, I I may deserve to reach my heavenly country, the possession of which is certain to those who persevere in Thy holy love.

Colloquy with Jesus risen again. Let us adore Him as our Redeemer and the divine Foundation of all our hopes. Let us thank Him for the many benefits which He has procured for us through His death, and ask of Him the necessary graces to serve Him with fervour, to make good use of His merits, and to apply to ourselves the fruits of His death and resurrection.

Resolutions. To avoid with care every voluntary fault. After our falls to have recourse to Jesus with confidence.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Jesus, infinite goodness, have mercy on us.

Prayer. Pater noster, &c.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SEVENTH CONTEMPLATION.

Jesus appears to the Two Disciples on their way to Emmaus.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And behold two of the disciples went the same day, towards the evening, to a town named Emmaus. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass that while they talked, Jesus Himself drawing near, went with them. But their eyes were held that they should not know Him. And they drew nigh to the town whither they were going, and He made as though He would go further. But they constrained Him, saying: Stay with us, because it is towards evening and the day is now far spent. And He went in with them. And it came to pass, whilst He was at table with them, He took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened and they knew Him: and He vanished out of their sight. And rising up the same hour, they went back to Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv. 13, 14, 15, 16, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus. The day is declining.

3rd Prelude. O my Jesus, grant that my heart may know Thee, and be ever ready to receive Thy divine instructions.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: at Jerusalem, the eleven Apostles and many disciples carefully shut up for fear of the Jews. On the road to Emmaus, Cleophas and his companion: they look sad and anxious. Let us gaze upon our divine Lord, who joins them and is about to speak to them. Happier than they are, we know that it is He: let us enjoy His holy presence at leisure, and not lose one of His holy words.

2nd Point. Listen to the Words: the two disciples discourse together on the things that have just come to pass. "What are these discourses that you hold one with another as you walk?" (Luke xxiv. 17), demands Jesus. "What, they exclaim, art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days? Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet, mighty in work and word before God and all the people. And how our chief priests and princes delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him" (Luke xxiv. 18, 19, 20). Their faith is weak. When their divine Master was alive they acknowledged Him as their Messias; now they only give Him the title of Prophet. They continue: "We hoped that it was He that should have redeemed Israel; and now besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done" (Luke xxiv. 21). They only express themselves by halves; they do not say that this mighty Prophet promised to rise again on the third day; they fear to be mistaken and to pass for having been too credulous. "Certain women also of our company," they add, "affrighted us, who before it was light were at the Sepulchre, and not finding His body, came, saying

that they had also seen a vision of Angels, who say that He is alive. And some of our people went to the Sepulchre, and found it so as the women had said, but Him they found not" (Luke xxiv. 22, 23, 24). Such is the recital of the disciples—a recital in which they display their own timidity, their doubts, and the suggestions of a wavering and uncertain mind, which fears to believe too much. Let us listen now to what Jesus is about to reply to them: "O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all things which the Prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory?" (Luke xxiv. 25, 26). Then going through the Prophets, He explained to them the Holy Scriptures. He commenced by reproaching them, but the disciples were not offended at it, but rather they were very glad to have met with some one to speak to them of their good Master, and strengthen their wavering faith. Jesus beheld this disposition in the depths of their heart, and this it was which merited for them the happiness of hearing from His divine lips the salutary instructions destined to remove the veil from before their eyes.

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: arrived near the town, the two disciples prepare to enter it. Jesus feigns to pass on. Will He really deprive them of His presence? Oh! no; but He desires to accord this grace to their own prayer. "Stay with us," the disciples say, "for the day is now far spent" (Luke xxiv. 29). Their hearts burn within them, and they ardently desire to retain with them the stranger who has spoken to them of Jesus. Oh! if they only knew that it was Jesus Himself. They enter and place themselves at table. Jesus takes in His Hands the bread: He blesses it, breaks it, and presents it to them. Their eyes are open; they know Him. How delightful is that moment, but oh! how short! Jesus has vanished; the recollection alone remains of what

they have seen and heard. Filled with a divine fire, they rise up the same hour, and go forth to announce the resurrection of Jesus to the Apostles. At Jerusalem, they find the Eleven gathered together, and with them others of the disciples, who say to them: "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon" (Luke xxiv. 34). The disciples from Emmaus relate what they have seen and heard, but several refuse to believe them.

Colloquy with Jesus risen. Let us offer Him our homage of adoration and love; let us beg Him to speak to our hearts, and to communicate to us, as He did to the disciples on the way to Emmaus, the gift of understanding and the flames of divine love. Let us also ask of Him the grace to diffuse around us His knowledge and love.

Resolutions. Often to recall to mind the presence of Jesus Christ, to listen interiorly to His voice, and to perform all our actions as in His sight.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Stay with me, O Lord."

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

EIGHTH MEDITATION.

Jesus Appears to Saint Peter.

The disciples say: "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon" (Luke xxiv. 34).

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. Represent to yourself the Cenacle where

the disciples of Emmaus relate to the Apostles what has just happened to them.

2nd Prelude. O my Saviour, grant that I may know full well what Thy mercy is towards repentant sinners, and deign to inspire me with sentiments of sincere repentance.

1st Point. With what readiness Jesus forgives St. Peter. Consider how graciously Jesus grants the chief of the Apostles the pardon of his triple denial. Three days have not yet passed, and already He favours him with His choicest graces and most intimate communications. He has not even waited until now to restore him all His love. From the moment when Peter repented, his sin was remitted, and the abundant tears which he shed were certain proof of it. They were produced by love and the penitence with which the Holy Spirit had filled his heart. Ah! our Lord is not like man; He is easily softened: He hates sin, but He loves the sinner tenderly, and from the moment that any one renounces his iniquities, he escapes from the dominion of justice to take his place beneath that of mercy. Why then, O my God, art Thou sometimes looked upon as a severe judge, incapable of compassionating human frailty? It would be considered an injury to the heart of a father to doubt of his indulgence for a guilty child who implores his pardon, yet Thy Sacred Heart is wounded without fear by those who regard Thee as inexorable in the severity of Thy justice. Ah! Lord, this is robbing Thee of the glory of which Thou art so jealous. Pardon us all, we implore of Thee, an injustice so displeasing to Thee, and grant us the grace to honour Thee henceforth by an unlimited confidence.

2nd Point. Jesus not only forgives St. Peter, but lavishes favours upon him. St. Peter was the first of the Apostles to whom Jesus deigned to show Himself after His resurrection. Yet, he was the only one who had aggravated a cowardly flight by a triple denial

still more cowardly. But Peter had repented: he had deplored his fall with a broken heart and bitter tears, and the sincerity of his sorrow had restored to him all his rights over the loving Heart of his divine Master. When Jesus forgives, He does not do it by halves. He has said by one of His prophets: "In what day soever the sinner shall return to Me, his iniquity shall not hurt him; I will cast his sins to the bottom of the sea; and if his sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow" (Ezek. xxxiii. 12; Mic. vii. 19; Isa. i. 18). Behold, in fact, how these promises are verified in the person of St. Peter. His soul was purified to that degree that Jesus did not judge him unworthy of the most signal favours. In His message sent by St. Mary Magdalene, He makes express mention of him. "Go, tell My disciples and Peter that I go before them into Galilee" (Mark xvi. 7). He deigned to appear to him on the day of His resurrection. Far from making him any reproach, He sweetly consoles him. The interior graces with which He fills his soul are not less precious or less profuse. St. Peter will unceasingly have his fall before his eyes, but the sad recollection of it will ever serve to deepen the ardour and the purity of his love. The sad experience which he has had of his own weakness has cured him of all presumption, and strengthened him in humility. Thus his sin, far from having permanently injured him, has become for him a source of great good. God of goodness! it is thus that Thou knowest how to draw good out of evil in the hearts of those who return to Thee sincerely! I cast myself with the most entire confidence into the arms of Thy infinite mercy.

Colloquy with our Lord risen. Let us adore His infinite goodness; let us beg of Him to discover to us the extent of His mercy, to animate our confidence, and to fill our hearts with a true love, which may cause us to weep over our faults for the sole motive of their being displeasing to Him.

Resolutions. To put away all feelings of anxiety, and to have recourse to God with entire confidence after our falls.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. The Lord is patient and full of mercy.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

NINTH CONTEMPLATION.

First Appearance of Jesus to the Disciples assembled together.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "Now when it was late that same day, and the doors were shut, where the disciples were gathered together for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, Peace be to you. And He showed them His hands and His side. The disciples, therefore, were glad when they saw the Lord. Now Thomas, one of the twelve, who is called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came" (John xx. 19, 20, 24).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself the Cenacle where the disciples are assembled together.

3rd Prelude. Grant me to know Thy adorable Heart, O Lord, and vouchsafe to inspire me with the sentiments of confidence and love, which Thou desirest to find within me.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: the Disciples; they are anxious and full of fear. Why do they show so little courage? It is because their faith is shaken, and their confidence in Jesus still more feeble and

hesitating. O my Saviour! it is to similar causes that I must attribute my cowardice in the presence of Thy enemies: vouchsafe to strengthen my heart as Thou didst fortify Thy Apostles through the grace of Thy Holy Spirit! Let us behold our divine Master, who comes full of bounty and goodness to console and encourage His disciples. A majestic sweetness lights up His countenance; the glory of His resurrection shines forth from His divine brow.

2nd Point. Listen to the Words: "Peace be with you" (Luke xxiv. 36). What, O Lord! is it, then, by words such as these that it pleases Thee to salute unfaithful disciples, who have so basely abandoned Thee? Yes! the divine Heart of Jesus knows not how to avenge injuries unless by new marks of kindness and love: if He sometimes move the hearts of sinners with a salutary fear, the end He has in view is always to restore peace to them, and to load them with His benefits. Let us listen again: "It is I, fear ye not" (Luke xxiv. 36). It is only after having thus reassured them that He makes them any reproach. His reproaches do not even then refer to their flight at the time of His Passion, nor to their little faith in His promises: He reproves them only for not believing those who had seen Him since He had risen again. Divine Model of every virtue! Thou wouldst here teach me to keep silence, with meekness and humility, under injuries offered personally to myself, to use precautions when I am obliged to reprove others, and never to upbraid them harshly with faults which they themselves are capable of recognising and repairing. O Jesus, give me this tender charity, which is one of the characteristics of Thy true disciples, and which is taught in all Thy actions.

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: the Apostles, astonished at the appearance of their divine Master, remain dumb with amazement. Jesus reassures them,

shows them His adorable wounds, and invites them to touch them, and thus satisfy themselves that it is He Himself. He goes so far as to eat with them. He gives them His peace anew, with the power to remit and retain sins, and then He vanishes from their sight. Afterwards let us behold St. Thomas arriving, and listening to the recital of these wonders, but obstinately refusing to believe unless he shall see with his own eyes, and actually touch his risen Saviour. It was to render my faith more firm, O Lord, that Thou didst permit the faith of Thy disciple to be so weak. From my heart I bless Thee for it.

4th Point. Let us consider how the divinity of Jesus shines forth in this mystery. He appears in the midst of His disciples, the doors being shut; He speaks to them with a sweetness mingled with authority, and grants them divine powers.

5th Point. Let us again consider with what kindness He compassionates their weakness, encourages them, eats with them, and even lets them touch Him. All this He does to strengthen our faith and excite us to confidence in Him.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us unite our acts of adoration to those of the Apostles, and rejoice with them in our Lord's resurrection. Let us beg Him to apply its fruits to our souls. Above all let us ask of Him a lively faith and unbounded confidence.

Resolutions. Often to recall the presence of Jesus. To animate all our actions with a spirit of lively faith and loving confidence.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Lord, give me Thy peace!

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus gives to His Apostles the Power of remitting Sins.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "He breathed on His Apostles, and He said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John xx. 22, 23).

2nd Prelude. Once more represent to yourself the Cenacle, the Apostles assembled together, and Jesus arisen, who speaks to them.

3rd Prelude. Fill my heart, O Lord, with a lively gratitude at the sight of the power bestowed on Thy Church.

1st Point. What goodness Jesus manifests for us in the institution of the Sacrament of Penance.

"Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven" (John xx. 22, 23). The Sacred Heart of our divine Master is an abyss of mercy. Having come down from Heaven to save sinners, He had shed for them even the last drop of His blood. He had united the virtue of His precious blood to the sacred waters of regeneration, destined to purify the guilty children of Adam and clothe them with the privileges of their divine adoption. He had established the Sacrament of His love that they might draw from it continually new strength to preserve and bring to perfection the graces of Baptism. But His tender solicitude foresaw that many of His ungrateful children would abuse His various benefits, and lose anew the precious gift of innocence. He determined, therefore, to provide for them a resource, and give them a means of rising again after every fall, and by an excess of goodness,

which is to be found in the loving Heart of God alone, He assigned no bounds or limits to the power which He gave to His Apostles for the justification of the sinner. What a powerful motive of confidence! The number, the magnitude, the continuity of our offences, our multiplied falls, are incapable of drying up for us this priceless source of inexhaustible mercy. O God of love and goodness! who can help loving Thee after such touching proofs of Thy love for us, and of Thy desire for our salvation.

2nd Point. The effects which the Sacrament of Penance produces in souls well disposed.

God, whose mercy surpasses all His works, and who desires the sanctification of the just no less than He longs for the conversion of sinners, has not willed that the effects of the Sacrament of Penance should be limited to the remission of sins. He has united to it, in favour of those who approach it with faith, humility, contrition, and confidence, abundant graces, calculated to make them advance in the practice of every virtue. It is in this sacred tribunal that upright and fervent souls acquire the knowledge of themselves, and the courage necessary to overcome all their bad inclinations. It is there that they learn to detest the smallest faults more and more; to punish themselves when they have had the misfortune to commit any; to keep their conscience pure, and to merit, by humble vigilance and assiduous prayer, the necessary helps to triumph over all their temptations. Do not permit, O my God, that I should ever neglect so easy and efficacious a means of perfection. Never suffer me to retain in my soul stains displeasing in Thy sight, or defects which expose me to the risk of offending Thee. Grant that I may prize the graces attached to the Sacrament of Penance as highly as I ought, and that I may always receive it with holy dispositions, and gather from it all the fruits of salvation which it contains.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us thank Him most devoutly for the power He has been pleased to leave to His Church, to purify us from our stains, and enrich us with His gifts. Let us ask His pardon for any imperfections and negligences by which we may have hindered the effects of this precious Sacrament, and beg of Him the grace always to approach it with holy dispositions.

Resolutions. Carefully to avoid the smallest faults. To impose on myself some acts of mortification with a view to dispose myself for the Sacrament of Penance, or to preserve the fruits of it in my soul.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Wash me yet more and more from my iniquity, O Lord" (Ps. l. 4).

Prayer. Pater noster, &c.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

ELEVENTH CONTEMPLATION.

Second Apparition of Jesus to the Disciples assembled together.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst and said, Peace be to you. Then He saith to Thomas, Put in thy finger hither; and see My hands; and bring hither thy hand, and put it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered, and said to Him, My Lord and my God" (John xx. 26-28).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself anew the Cenacle and the disciples assembled together.

3rd Prelude. Grant, O Lord, that I may draw a lively faith and ardent charity from this Meditation.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: our divine Saviour, the Apostles, and particularly St. Thomas; he still doubts, and looks fixedly on Jesus risen.

2nd Point. Listen to the Words: "Peace be with you". Jesus is the God of Peace. He diffuses His peace in every place that He honours with His presence, and in every heart which He deigns to visit. Let us open our hearts to Him, and beg of Him to fix His dwelling therein. After this sweet salutation, our Lord addresses Himself to St. Thomas. "Put in hither thy finger," He says to him; "bring hither thy hand, and put it into My side" (John xx. 27). What condescension! What goodness! O my Divine Saviour, who can help being penetrated with gratitude and love for Thee? Again let us listen: "Be not faithless, but believing" (John xx. 27). "My Lord and my God!" (John xx. 28) exclaims St. Thomas. Let us repeat with him this exclamation, in which he displays his faith, his veneration, and his love. Jesus says to him, "Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed! blessed are they that have not seen, yet have believed" (John xx. 29). It is to us that these last words are addressed. We are happy in believing without having seen; happier still if, practising what we believe, we deserve to behold one day in Heaven Him who is here below the object of our faith.

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: the interior are not less striking than the exterior; for at the same moment that St. Thomas draws near to his divine Master, to touch His adorable Wounds, grace, acting upon his heart, totally changes his dispositions. A few moments before he was an unbeliever who obstinately refused to yield to the most solid proofs; now he is an Apostle, full of ardour, and ready to confess, even at the peril of his life, the divinity of the Master

whom he recognises. It is thus that Jesus enlightens, renovates, and influences those who are so happy as to draw near to Him. His divine Wounds send forth a virtue powerful enough to convert souls and inspire them with the most generous sentiments. O my Saviour, open unto me these sacred Wounds; there let me bathe myself, and become penetrated with Thy love, and enriched with every virtue.

Colloquy with Jesus risen again. Let us unite our homage to that of St. Thomas, repeating with him from the depths of our hearts, "My Lord and my God". Let us beg Him to increase our faith more and more, and above all, to render it lively, practical, and faithful by charity.

Resolution. To exercise the spirit of faith, doing all our actions for God, and with a view to please Him.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.
Spiritual Bouquet. "My Lord and my God."
Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.
Examen of the Meditation, page 5..

TWELFTH MEDITATION.

The Second Miraculous Draught of Fish.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And the disciples went forth and entered into the ship; and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was come, Jesus stood on the shore, yet the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. He saith to them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes" (John xxi. 3, 4, 6).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself the banks of the lake of Galilee, and the ship in which the Apostles are fishing.

3rd Prelude. Divine Jesus, ever remain with me by Thy grace, and grant that I may ever remain with Thee, by my fidelity.

1st Point. Without Jesus all is darkness, difficulty, labour and failure.

"The disciples entered into the ship to fish, but that night they took nothing" (John xxi. 3). The unsuccessful labour of the Apostles, in the absence of their divine Master, is a striking image of the state of one who has allowed himself to be separated from Jesus by mortal sin, and who remains with indifference in that dangerous state. All is darkness for that unfaithful and unhappy soul. If he be spoken to of the things of salvation, he understands nothing; he neither sees the danger he runs, the blessings he has lost, nor the ingratitude of which he is guilty towards the God of goodness, whose anger he has incurred. Blindness is not his only misfortune. He passes his days in trouble and suffering, since the Eternal Truth has said, "There is no peace for the wicked" (Isa. xlviii. 22). The remorse that he would in vain stifle pursues him unceasingly. His heart, made to be united to God, seeks its happiness in creatures without being able to find it. He is afflicted and torments himself, without having even the consolation of hoping for any recompense of his sufferings; for it belongs to God alone to bestow that recompense, and it is not for Him that he is working. Divine Jesus, what a return of thanksgiving do I not owe Thee, for having called me back to Thee when I had the misfortune to stray away from Thee. Ah! Lord, never let me forget the fidelity that I owe Thee. Confirm my heart in Thy love, and listen also to the prayers which I offer Thee for sinners; deign to exercise towards them the same mercy which I have experienced in myself.

2nd Point. With Jesus all is light, ease, and profit. After having considered the misfortune of an unfaithful soul, who passes life separated from Jesus, let us cast our eyes on the happiness of the soul that rejoices in His Holy presence, and lives in His love. They who are united to Jesus by sanctifying grace enjoy His purest lights. Not only do they know and taste the consoling truths of faith, but the Holy Spirit communicates Himself to them, discovers to them the perfections of God, instructs them in His ways, and enables them to walk with a firm step in the paths of perfection. A heavenly unction unites itself to these clear lights, which makes them love their duties, and mingles even with their trials, should they have any, a sweet and peaceful consolation. They love God alone, and they are tenderly loved by Him, which constitutes their happiness. But these precious advantages are not limited to the present life; all their days are full of merit; their least actions acquire for them an infinite recompense, because these are united to the merits of Jesus Christ, and presented to God the Father by our divine Saviour. O my Jesus, grant that I may be ever united to Thee by ardent love and perfect fidelity. May I become penetrated with Thy Spirit, and imitate Thy divine example more and more, that so the sweet ties which bind me to Thee may each day become bonds of closer union.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us thank Him for all the graces which He has so generously showered upon us. Let us humbly ask His pardon for our resistances to His grace, for our infidelities, and beg Him never to suffer us to separate ourselves from Him.

Resolution. To labour seriously to acquire the virtue the most necessary to us, that so we may become more closely united to Jesus.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Lord, I am in Thee and Thou

in me. Grant that we may ever continue thus united together for all eternity.

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

THIRTEENTH CONTEMPLATION.

The same Subject.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas, who is called Didymus, and Nathanael, who was of Cana of Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples. Simon Peter saith to them: I go a fishing. They say to him: We also come with thee. And they went forth, and entered into the ship, and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was come, Jesus stood on the shore, yet the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. He saith to them: Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes" (John xxi. 2-4, 6).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself anew the banks of the lake, and the ship of the Apostles at a little distance.

3rd Prelude. Grant, O my Jesus, that in this Meditation I may learn to love Thee as St. John did, and to humble myself before Thee as St. Peter did.

1st Point. Consider the Persons, and, first, the Apostles: they are intent on their fishing, and not expecting to see Jesus. Nevertheless their divine Master is on the shore watching them with a tender interest. O my Saviour, how often hast Thou not honoured me with a visit interiorly when I did not even think of

desiring it? If, then, Thou art so liberal in granting favours unasked, what wilt Thou not grant, in Thy goodness, to fervent and assiduous prayer?

2nd and 3rd Points. Listen to the Words, and consider the Actions: "Children," said Jesus, "have you anything to eat?" (John xxi. 5). "No," replied the Apostles, without having recognised Him. "Cast the net on the right side of the ship," He said to them. "They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes" (John xxi. 6). The miraculous draught of fish in waters where they had laboured in vain during the whole night arouses the attention of the Apostles. John recognises his divine Master. "It is the Lord" (John xxi. 7), he exclaims to St. Peter. The latter hastens to put on his outer garment, which he had taken off to fish, and throws himself into the lake, in a transport of love and self-abasement. The other disciples steer the ship towards the shore, where they find hot coals lying, and a fish broiled thereon, and bread. Jesus orders them to place some of the fish that they had just caught on the fire, and then invites them to take their repast. The Apostles easily recognise their divine Master under such fatherly kindness, but they do not dare to speak to Him. O my Jesus, give me that religious respect, together with love and confidence, which Thou art pleased to behold in hearts which belong to Thee. Peter has rejoined his brethren; all take their place: Jesus divides among them the miraculous feast which He has prepared for them. It is thus, O my God, that Thou dost provide for the wants of those who belong to Thee, and makest repose succeed to labour.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore His power and goodness, which provides for the wants of all His creatures, and watches in a special manner over the just. Let us thank Him for the particular helps which He has granted us, both for soul and body, in

those moments when it seemed to us that we should want even necessaries. Let us place ourselves in His hands with entire confidence, abandoning to Him the care of all that concerns us.

Resolution. To produce many acts of confidence, humility, and love, in the course of the day.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Lord, I have hoped in Thee; let me never be confounded."

Prayer. Pater noster, &c.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FOURTEENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus asks St. Peter Three Times if he Loves Him.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "When therefore they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter: Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith to Him: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed My lambs. He saith to him again: Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me? He saith to Him: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed My lambs. He said to him the third time: Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved, because He had said to him the third time, Lovest thou Me? and he said to Him: Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He said to him: Feed My sheep" (John xxi. 15-17).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself once more the shore of the lake of Tiberias.

3rd Prelude. Divine Jesus, grant me grace to repair my faults by an ardent and generous love, which may prompt me to labour zealously for the salvation of others.

1st Point. St. Peter makes Jesus a triple protestation of his love, to repair his triple denial.

Do not let us be weary of studying the conduct of our divine Master, the dispositions of His Sacred Heart, and the refinements of His love. He had forgiven St. Peter his triple denial, but He read in the soul of His penitent Apostle the desire to repair his fault. He saw that his heart was oppressed with bitter grief, and it was to relieve him that Jesus gave him the opportunity of repeating three times the protestation of his love. What amiability! what kindness! Who can help loving a Saviour so full of thoughtful tenderness? Twice St. Peter replies to the question which Jesus puts to him, but the third time he is afflicted: he doubts his own heart, and answers humbly: "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee" (John xxi. 17). Presumption caused his fall: humility saves him; it purifies his love, animates his penitence, and renders him worthy of the new favours that Jesus is about to bestow on him. A fall thus repaired is more advantageous to the soul and more glorious to God than fidelity less humble and less full of love and gratitude. Grant me grace, O my God, to be filled with these holy dispositions, and to repair my sins by a repentance as perfect and sincere.

2nd Point. Jesus points out to St. Peter the means of testifying his love.

"Jesus saith to Simon Peter: Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith to Him: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed My lambs" (John xxi. 15). Before His Passion Peter had said to Him: "I will lay down

my life for Thee" (John xiii. 37). Jesus had not demanded of him this proof of his devotedness, but now He asks him for one more pleasing to Him. "Feed My lambs," He says to him. Jesus came into this world only to save souls. To co-operate with Him in this His cherished work is, in some sort, to do more for Him than even to sacrifice life. What more noble employment, what occupation more worthy of a Christian soul than to teach the way of salvation to the ignorant, to win back those who stray from the right road, to warn the weak against the seduction of pleasures, the force of bad example, and the contagion of vice, and to bring all to love the sweet yoke of our Lord, by showing it to them such as it really is? The divine wisdom does not call all to exercise the functions of an apostolic life, but it gives to every one some opportunity and some means of exercising that enlightened zeal which ought to be found in every faithful heart. We do not love Jesus when we are insensible to the loss of souls redeemed at the price of His Blood, or when we do not labour, at least by our prayers and example, to bring them back to God, and to the work of their salvation. O my Saviour, engrave this truth in the bottom of my heart, and grant that it may be always the invariable rule of my conduct.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us say to Him from the depths of our heart: "Lord, I have greatly offended Thee, but 'Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee'" (John xxi. 17). Let us ask of Him the gift of an ardent and ingenious zeal which will know how to devise and execute efficacious means for leading souls to God. Let us give ourselves to Him without reserve, in order that He may make use of us according to His designs for the salvation of souls.

Resolutions. Not to let any opportunity escape us of labouring for the salvation of souls. If none present

themselves, to offer up some prayers or acts of virtue for the conversion of sinners.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee" (John xxi. 17).

Prayer. Receive, O Lord, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

FIFTEENTH MEDITATION.

Instructions of our Lord to His Disciples.

[Note.—Several are of opinion that, besides the eleven Apostles, who were present on the mountain in Galilee—probably Mount Thabor—a great number of the disciples also were present, and that this was the most solemn of all our Lord's appearances, at which 500 of the brethren were assembled together, according to St. Paul.]

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them: and Jesus, coming, spoke to them saying: All power is given to Me in Heaven and on earth. Going therefore teach ye all nations: baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world. Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel. He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be condemned" (Matt xxviii. 16, 18-20; Mark xvi. 15, 16).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself Mount Thabor, on which are assembled a great multitude of the disciples.

3rd Prelude. Divine Jesus, give me a lively and practical faith, that, after having served Thee on earth, I may have the happiness of possessing Thee in Heaven.

1st Point. In order to be saved we must believe the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

"He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be condemned" (Mark xvi. 16). It is an article of our belief that without faith it is impossible to please God. What gratitude do we not owe Him for having bestowed on us this inestimable gift before we were even able to appreciate it? Scarcely were we born when we received the grace of Baptism, and the germs of the three theological virtues were implanted in our souls. If from our earliest years we have implicitly believed the truths imparted to us by Christian parents, if we have learned from them to practise the duties of Christianity and relish the things of salvation, we are indebted for this to the divine light of faith, which increased with our years, and taught us to fear and avoid every danger that menaced our innocence; by this we have been enlightened as to our true interests, and been induced to make use of the means to ensure our salvation. Whenever we have been unfaithful it was faith which taught us to feel and repair our losses. We owe everything to this blessed illumination, and our ingratitude would be monstrous if we were to neglect to thank God for it. O my God, I give Thee thanks for having favoured me with this precious gift; grant that I may be ever faithful to it.

2nd Point. To be saved, we must practise the morality taught by Jesus Christ.

"Going therefore teach ye all nations: baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). If faith be necessary to salvation, good works are not less so; and it is a most dangerous error to believe that

in order to be saved it is sufficient to know Jesus Christ without taking pains to practise what He has commanded His disciples. Our divine Saviour has said: "If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments" (Matt. xix. 17). "If any man will follow Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me" (Mark viii. 34). "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart" (Matt. xi. 29). "Judge not and you shall not be judged" (Luke vi. 37). "Forgive and you shall be forgiven" (Luke vi. 37). It is in the observance of these maxims that faith becomes active and practical, and ensures for us our right to the inheritance of the elect. I ought here to enter into the depths of my heart, interrogate my conscience, and examine before God whether my conduct is in keeping with the truths which I profess to believe. O God of goodness, Thou knowest all my works, and canst read my soul much better than I can myself. Have mercy on me, enlighten me, strengthen me, help me to practise the good which Thou commandest me, and conduct me safely to my Heavenly country.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us thank Him for the precious gift of faith, and humble ourselves for the innumerable faults by which we have resisted its light. Let us beg Him to give us grace henceforward to conform our conduct to our belief; let us make practical resolutions to the same effect.

Resolutions. To exercise ourselves to-day in the spirit of faith, performing all our actions from a supernatural motive; such as to please God, to atone for our sins, and the like.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "I do believe, Lord; help my unbelief" (Mark ix. 23).

Prayer. Soul of Christ, &c., page 5.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SIXTEENTH CONTEMPLATION.

The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude "And He led them out as far as Bethania, and lifting up His hands He blessed them. And it came to pass whilst He blessed them, He departed from them, and was carried up into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God" (Luke xxiv. 50, 51; Mark xvi. 19).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself Mount Olivet with an immense crowd assembled upon it.

3rd Prelude. Grant, O my Jesus, that I may follow Thee to Heaven in desire and affection.

1st Point. Consider the Persons: the crowd of disciples; some among them still doubt, but the greater number are fully convinced of the resurrection of Jesus. See how the latter gaze on Him with attention, joy, and love; and how they fear to lose even one single word He says. Let us also contemplate our divine Master. What amiability, what majesty! O my Saviour! when shall I behold Thee unveiled in the splendour of Thy glory?

2nd Point. Listen to the Words: "Go ye forth and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. xxviii. 19). It is for me that this order is given. Jesus distinguishes in His foreknowledge the time and place in which I am to be born. He wills that the light of faith should penetrate these, and that I should be born a child of His Church. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. xxviii. 20). These instructions have been carefully transmitted to me; have I profited by them as I ought? "And behold I am with you all days, even to

the consummation of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20). Jesus will always remain with His Church by the guidance of His Holy Spirit. He will also be with me by His real presence in our holy Tabernacles. He will be with each one of His faithful by His grace, by His love, and by the interior and sacramental life which shall incorporate Him with them. Divine Jesus, we have lost nothing; Thou hast not left this world, since in ascending to Heaven Thou hast left us the blessed Eucharist.

3rd Point. Consider the Actions: Jesus raises His hands and blesses His disciples; as He blesses them He is raised up, and then ascends higher and higher; soon a bright cloud envelops Him, and He disappears from their sight. The scene is closed on earth to commence in Heaven. Bright legions of Cherubim and Seraphim hasten to meet their King and sound forth their transports in songs of joy and victory. The eternal gates are open, the King of glory, the Lord strong and mighty makes His triumphant entry into His Heavenly Kingdom, and takes His place at the right hand of His Father, there to reign eternally with Him. The angels redouble their celestial concerts, and the Saints whom Jesus has introduced with Him into glory commence that eternal alleluia, with which the celestial city shall for all eternity resound. O my Saviour, what would I not give to go this moment and join the Heavenly chorus! But before enjoying so great a happiness we must merit it by suffering. Thou, by right, hast purchased it by the Cross. Give me, then, strength to suffer, and the grace to love Thee, that so I may follow Thee to the happy abode of Thy divine recompense.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us adore Him in union with the Angels and Saints who witnessed His triumphs and His glory. Let us beg Him to detach our hearts entirely from the earth, to draw our affections towards Heaven, and teach us to aspire, with the Saints, after our celestial country. Let us ask of Him the necessary

graces to triumph over all the trials of life and to persevere happily to the end.

Resolution. To encourage ourselves under our trials and difficulties with the thoughts of Heaven.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. My God, how contemptible does this world appear when I contemplate Heaven!

Prayer. Pater noster, &c.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

SEVENTEENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is Seated at the Right Hand of His Father.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God" (Mark xvi. 19).

2nd Prelude. Image to yourself the interior of Heaven, brilliantly illuminated with the glory of God: gaze on our Lord seated at the right hand of His Father, looking down upon us with kindness and benignity.

3rd Prelude. Grant me grace, O Lord, always to draw fresh courage from the remembrance and hope of the good things which Thou hast prepared for me in Heaven.

1st Point. How is Jesus occupied in Heaven?

Jesus, who on earth laboured solely for our happiness, has not changed with regard to us. He is ever our most tender Father, our most constant Benefactor, our most generous Saviour. From His throne of glory

above He is attentive to our prayers, and provides for our wants. He incessantly displays the wounds of His Passion to His Father, in order to move Him in our favour. He pleads our cause with Him, and prepares for us the eternal rewards which His sufferings have merited for us. What motives of encouragement for us in times of trial! We have a Saviour whose looks are continually fixed upon us, whose divine Heart is ever open to listen to our supplications and bestow on us every grace. Grant, O my Jesus, that these recollections may be ever present to my thoughts, to inspire me with fresh ardour, and to enable me to arrive at length at that eternal happiness which Thou hast prepared for me, and earnestly desirest to bestow upon me.

2nd Point. What is the happiness which Jesus has prepared for us in Heaven?

The beatitude which Jesus has merited and prepared for us in Heaven surpasses all created intelligence. The Apostle to whom God had shown something of this happiness assures us that eye hath not seen, ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive anything to be compared to it. Let us endeavour, nevertheless, to form some slight notion of it from the words of Holy Scripture. "God," says St. John, speaking of the elect, "shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away" (Apoc. xxi. 4). Repose and unchangeable happiness! such shall be the delightful portion of the elect. But their felicity shall not be limited to such like enjoyments: beatitude of a description infinitely superior awaits them. Let us hearken once more to the same Apostle: "When God shall appear in His glory," he says, "we shall be like unto Him, because we shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii. 2). God, in discovering to us His divine perfections, will unite us to Himself in the most perfect manner;

our happiness will be one with His, as well as our glory: we shall contemplate Him, love Him, and possess Him, and our beatitude will be as ineffable in its greatness as it will be eternal in its duration. O my God, Thou hast prepared for me this happiness, and dost offer it unto me: it depends upon myself to enjoy it some day. Do not permit me to stray for a single instant from the road which is to conduct me to it.

Colloquy with our Lord. Let us thank Him with all the gratitude of which we are capable for all the labours and sufferings which He has been pleased to undergo in order to obtain Heaven for us. Let us ask His pardon for our indifference in not striving more earnestly to merit the happiness He has prepared for us, and promise to be more faithful to Him in future. Let us beg Him to bestow on us all the aid of which we stand in need.

Resolution. To animate ourselves with the thought of Heaven, especially in those circumstances in which virtue is difficult to practise.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. For a moment's suffering an eternity of happiness!

Prayer. Pater noster, &c.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

EIGHTEENTH MEDITATION.

THE APOSTLES RETIRE TO THE CENACLE, THERE TO AWAIT THE COMING OF THE HOLY GHOST.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount that is called Olivet. They went up into an upper room,

and were persevering in prayer with the holy women and with Mary the mother of Jesus, and the brethren" (Act i. 12-14).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself the Cenacle where Mary is with the holy women and the disciples, all persevering together in prayer.

3rd Prelude. Grant, O Lord, that preparing my heart assiduously for the coming of Thy Holy Spirit, I may deserve to receive the plenitude of His graces.

1st Point. The example of the Apostles teaches us how we ought to prepare ourselves to receive the Holy Ghost.

When Jesus took leave of His Apostles He promised them His Spirit. Let us consider with what fidelity they prepared themselves to receive it. They returned to Jerusalem, as their divine Master had commanded them; they shut themselves up in the Cenacle, and persevered in united, fervent, and assiduous prayer. It is thus that I ought to prepare my heart for the coming of the Holy Spirit, on the return of that feast on which He delights to shower down His graces on souls well disposed to receive them. If it is not possible for me to withdraw entirely from all communication with the world, I ought to make an interior solitude in my heart, where I may converse freely with God. I ought to pray with earnestness, humility, and perseverance. I ought to unite my prayers with those of the Saints, begging of them to help me to procure the graces which I am soliciting. O my God, if I have so often allowed those days of blessings, in which Thy Holy Spirit delights to pour down the plenitude of His treasures, to pass over without fruit, it is because I have not done what I ought to have done to draw His graces on myself. Pardon me, O Lord, my past negligence, and bless the resolution which I make to-day of being in future more watchful and more fervent.

2nd Point. The Holy Spirit is the Distributor of every Heavenly gift.

If up to the present time I have so little desired and so feebly demanded the graces of the Holy Spirit, it is because I have not sufficiently appreciated their infinite value and the effects which they produce. The Holy Spirit enlightens us in our doubts and difficulties, strengthens us in our weaknesses, and makes us relish the things of God and of our salvation. He is to us what the refreshing breeze which tempers the heat of the day is to the traveller. His Heavenly unction sweetens the sharpest pains. He is the Father of the poor, and is ready to enrich the souls that are still destitute of virtue and Heavenly gifts if they do but humbly acknowledge their misery. He is that sacred fire of charity which makes us bring forth fruits worthy of the Lord, the Author of the seven gifts which sanctify the Fountain of life without which our souls are parched and withered. "O my God! up to the present time I have not felt in a sufficiently lively manner the necessity of the visit of Thy Holy Spirit, or how precious it would be to me; grant me grace to comprehend so important a truth, and deign to excite in me by Thy grace such vehement desires and move me to make such earnest prayers, that nothing may be refused me."

Colloquy with the Blessed Virgin and the Apostles. Let us beg them to communicate to us their fervour and their holy desires, and to teach us how to draw down the Holy Spirit with His gifts and graces upon ourselves. Let us implore them to aid us before Him with their powerful intercessions.

Resolutions. To practise recollection, and frequently to invoke the Holy Spirit.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. Come, Holy Ghost! Come, Thou Father of the poor! Come and enlighten us!

Prayer. Pater noster, &c.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

NINETEENTH CONTEMPLATION.

The Descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude. "And when the days of Pentecost were accomplished they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts ii. 1-4).

2nd Prelude. Represent to yourself the Cenacle and the city of Jerusalem.

3rd Prelude. O Lord, give me Thy Holy Spirit, and fill me with a lively and active faith.

1st Point. Consider the Persons, a moment before the accomplishment of the prodigy. First the Apostles, their countenances expressing the earnestness of their prayer; at one time they are prostrate, then erect with their eyes raised towards Heaven. Mary is wrapt in profound recollection. The Angels carry before the throne of God the prayers sent forth from that holy spot. The Blessed Trinity is attentive to vows and supplications so full of fervour. Let us behold the city with its crowd of inhabitants and strangers; how greatly does the tumult and agitation there contrast with the calm peace of the Cenacle. Among the throng God discerns some upright and faithful hearts who in a few moments more will be enlightened from on high.

2nd and 3rd Points. Listen to the Words and consider the Actions. "Suddenly a sound is heard as of the rush of a mighty wind, the Cenacle is violently shaken. A globe of fire appears at the upper end of the room, which, dividing itself in the form of tongues, rests

upon every one present. In an instant the Apostles are changed into new men; they no longer display ignorance or imperfection, earthly inclinations or cowardice. They themselves open the doors which they have so long kept shut for fear of the Jews; they show themselves courageously in the public places, and preach Jesus Christ in the midst of the nation which had but just crucified Him. Let us listen to the discourses of the astonished people. "Are not all these that speak Galileans? And how have we heard, every man our own tongue wherein we were born? What meaneth this?" (Acts ii. 7, 8, 12). Let us also listen to the simple yet sublime discourse of St. Peter: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as you also know. Him you have crucified and slain. This Jesus hath God raised again, whereof all we are witnesses. Know therefore most certainly that this same Jesus whom you have crucified is Christ the Lord" (Acts ii. 22, 23, 32, 36). These words inspired by the Holy Ghost excite a salutary sorrow in the hearts of many. "What shall we do?" they ask. And Peter said to them: "Do penance, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts ii. 37, 38). These words are received with docility; three thousand souls are converted and join the disciples of Jesus.

Colloquy with the Apostles. Let us offer them every homage of respect and gratitude as the worthy instruments of whom God has made use to found His Church and to illuminate the world with the precious light of faith. Let us beg them to obtain for us the grace to profit as we ought to do by so precious a gift, and to become partakers of their zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Resolution. To practise recollection and the spirit of faith, doing all our actions for God.

Offering of the Resolution, page 4.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Send forth Thy Spirit, O Lord, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth."

Prayer. Pater noster, &c.

Examen of the Meditation, page 5.

TWENTIETH MEDITATION.

THE SAME SUBJECT.—APPLICATION OF THE SENSES.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

Preludes. The same as in the last Meditation.

1st Point. Sight. Let us gaze anew on that excited crowd. The Apostles are replenished with the Holy Ghost and proclaim aloud the divinity of Jesus in the midst of the guilty city. The scribes and Pharisees tremble with rage, but dare not openly oppose the preaching of the Apostles, because they are held back by a secret power. Let us look on Mary, who remains concealed, praying for the success of the Apostles' preaching.

2nd Point. Hearing. Let us listen again to the generous confession of the Apostles, and to the sobs of the converted and repentant Jews who demand Baptism. Let us also give ear as far as we can to the secret language of the Holy Spirit within them; or rather let us implore of this divine Spirit to speak to our own hearts and teach us what we ought to do in order to find grace before God.

3rd Point. Smell. What a perfume of life, of strength, and of divinity is diffused around the Apostles! It is the breathing of the Holy Spirit who is about to renew the face of the earth. Let us pray this divine

Spirit of love to renew our hearts, and diffuse them in the perfumes of every virtue.

4th Point. Taste. Let us taste the ardour with which the Apostles are penetrated, and also the lively compunction of the new converts. Let us taste the sweetness of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Ghost—gifts of wisdom and piety—fruits of peace, of holy joy, and ardent charity. Let us excite ourselves to desire and pray for these, and force ourselves to labour to obtain them.

5th Point. Touch. What can we take hold of here? All is interior. It is the Spirit of the Lord diffusing itself in hearts open to receive Him. Let us open ours to Him: let us beg Him to come and fill them, and render them completely docile to all His divine inspirations.

Colloquy, *Resolution*, *Offering of the Resolution*, *Spiritual Bouquet*, *Prayer*, and *Examen of the Meditation*, the same as in the preceding Contemplation.

Laus sit Jesu et Mariæ.

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SISTER OF MERCY (Tr.).

AUTHOR

Contemplations and Meditations

TITLE

(Passion and Death of Our Lord).

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